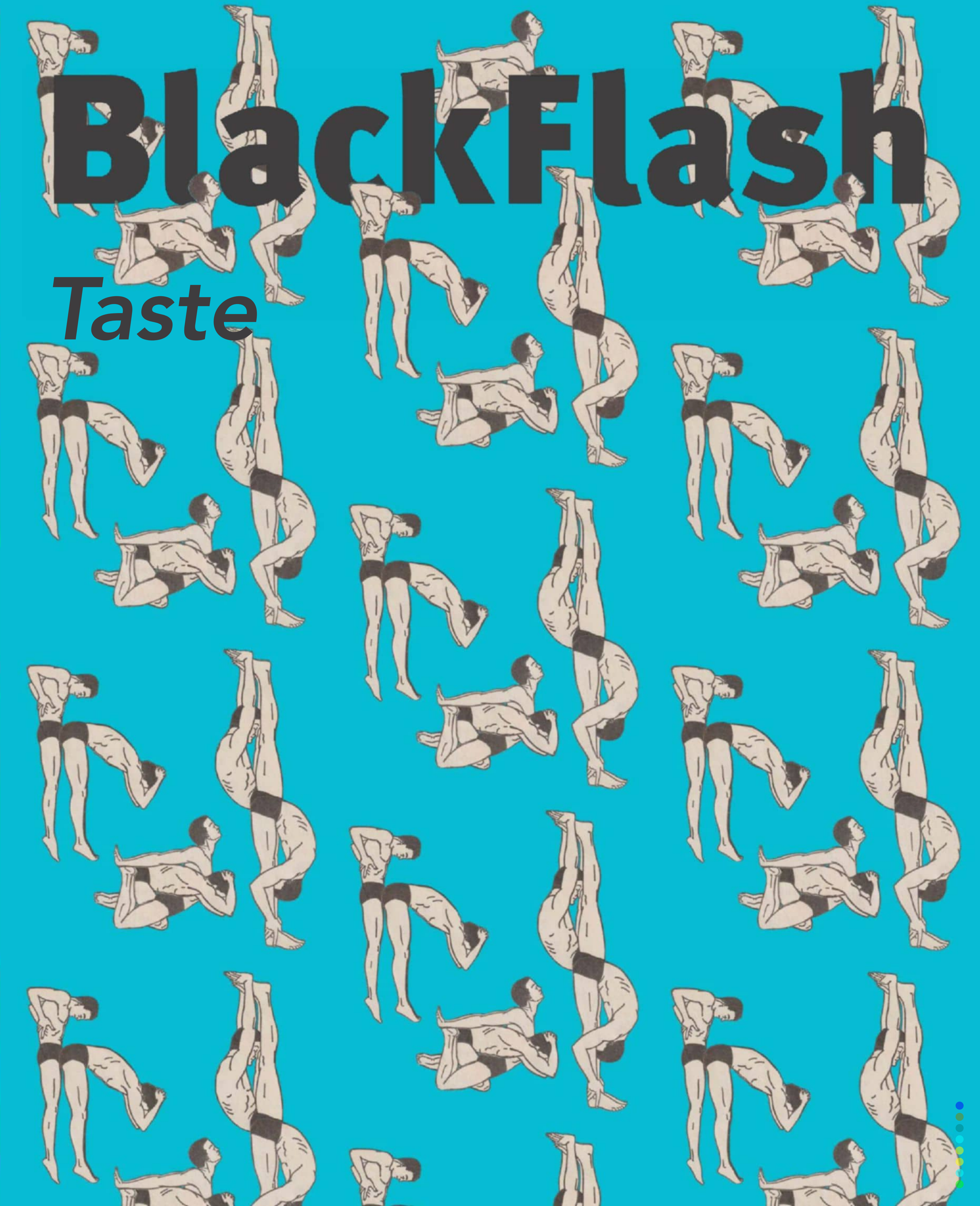
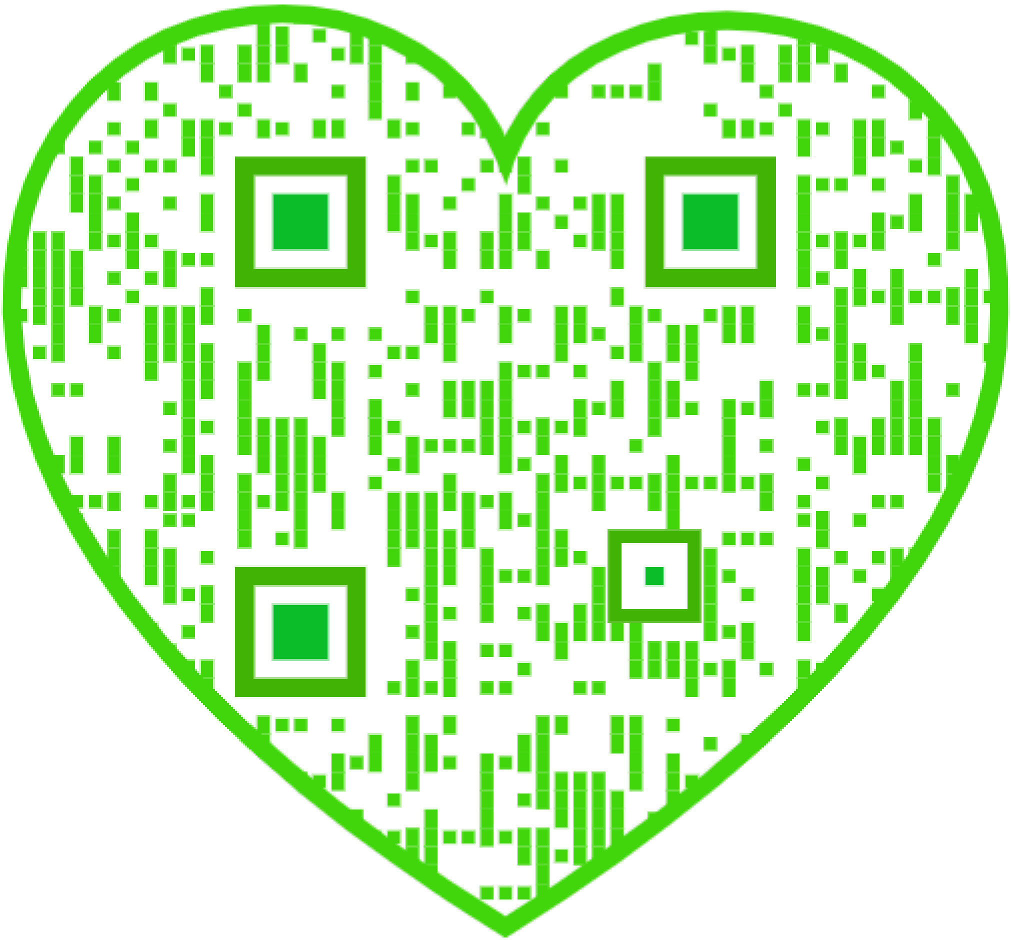
Phomohobes | Steff Huì Cí Ling & Lily Jue Sheng | Rah Eleh

BlackFlash

Taste





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WINTER 2025

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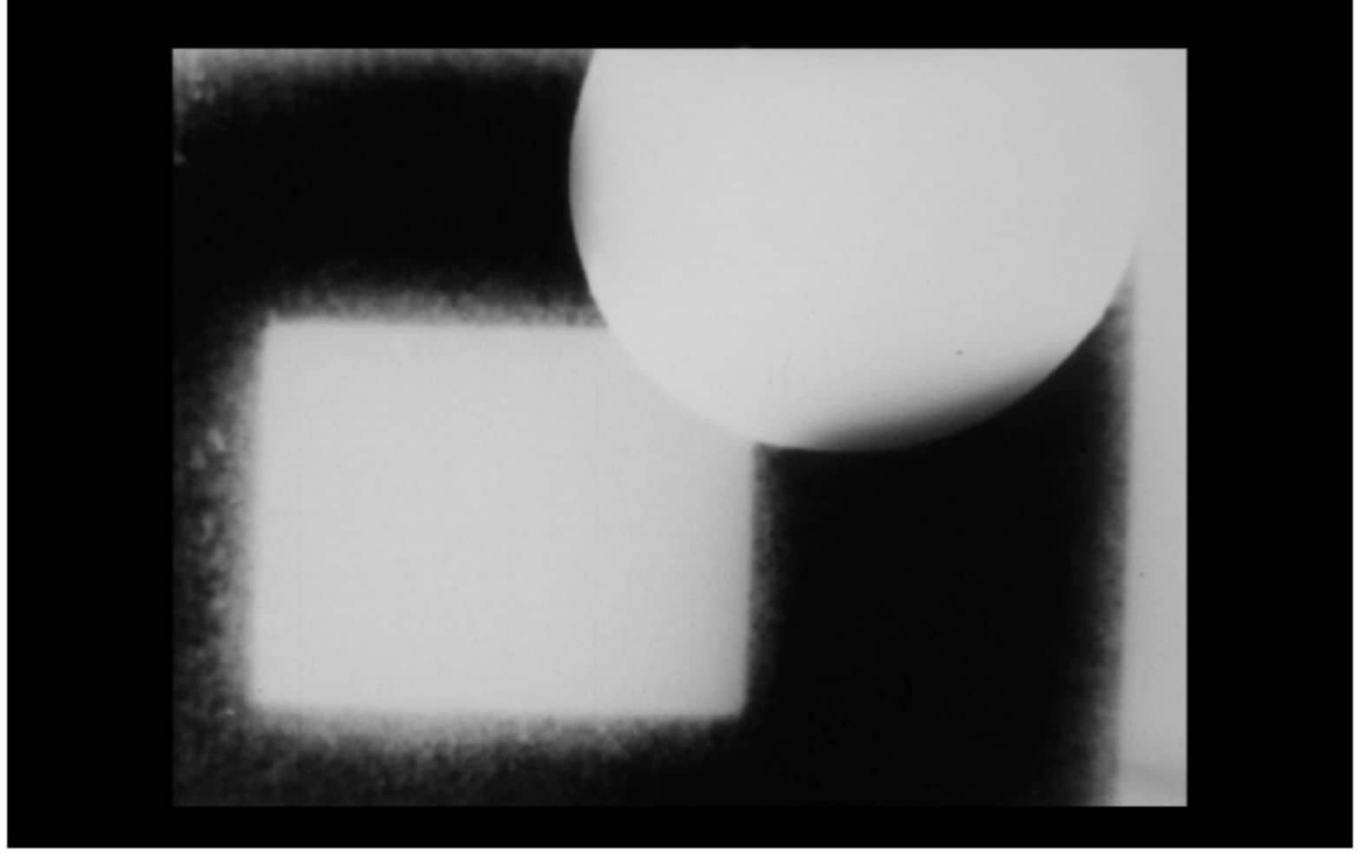

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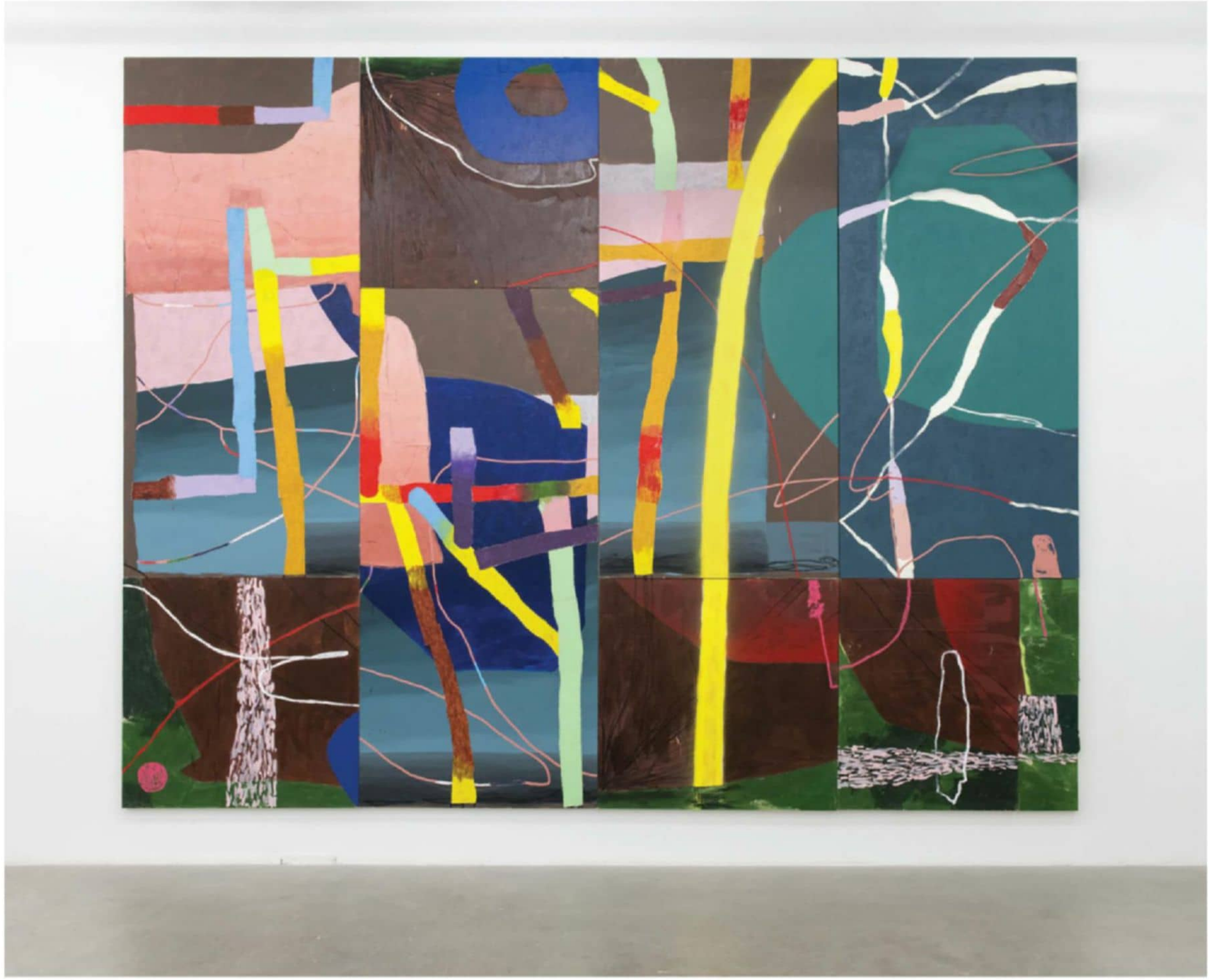
Cover: Phomohobes. *Perverted 1950s Child's Bedroom Wallpaper*, 2021. Collage. Image courtesy of the artists.



RUSSNA KAUR
again and again... finally, the freedom to fall

COLLEGE ART GALLERIES
JANUARY 24 – APRIL 25, 2025

curator, Leah Taylor

Image: Russna Kaur, *What would YOU do?*, 2019, acrylic, oil, latex, pastel and sawdust on canvas and wood panel.

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KENDERDINE ART GALLERY
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AFTERTASTE:

Editorial Note

By Madeline Bogoch, Guest Editor

This issue emerged from many overlapping conversations that began when I joined *BlackFlash* as Guest Editor this past August. The articles and projects in this issue stem from commissioned responses to the theme of "taste," framed in part by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's text *Distinction*, which examines the relationship between taste and class. Taste isn't often accounted for in art writing, yet the question of how it operates in the arts is one I return to. As critics, artists, and curators, we professionally leverage taste; art institutions claim (diminishing) authority over it, and in a sector where clout ostensibly translates to capital, taste is not something we can afford to leave unexamined.

Though the threads may seem oblique at first, I see this issue as a pseudo-sequel to the previous one (Labour, 41.2). This connection is most evident in **Some Call it DIY, Others Call it Workers' Control**, a conversation between curator, critic, and organizer **Steff Huì Cí Ling** and artist-filmmaker **Lily Jue Sheng**. Expanding on a discussion that took place at Anthology Film Archives following a screening of Jue Sheng's work, the piece examines what it means to organize as arts workers while building solidarity beyond the sector and create art with "working-class intention" in a "bourgeois context."

Several articles and projects in this issue align with the longstanding practice in contemporary art of dismantling the hegemony of "good" taste. While "Some Call it DIY…" critiques how art circulates under capitalism, artist duo **Phomohobes'** project **Perverse Luxury** inverts that dynamic, recontextualizing vintage magazine ads into absurd compositions that reveal a latent queerness and class consciousness in the source material. In **Kiki Dishes it Out**, writer and curator **Luther Konadu** profiles artist **Kiera Boult's** performance art alter-ego Kiki, whose mannerisms channel reality television stars and talk show hosts to deliver biting and poignant institutional critique. Writer **Gabrielle Willms** explores the art of cringe in **Erica Eyres'** ceramics, paintings, and video practice. In her profile, **Deadpan Drama: Erica Eyres' Art of Surreal Subjectivity**, Willms notes that Eyres uses "deadpan humour and self-consciously amateur aesthetics… to probe and unsettle social constructions related to femininity, heterosexuality, and class."

Eyres' penchant for transformation through disguise and costume finds a parallel in the work of **Judah Iyunade**, who often adopts various guises in his photography and films. In **Our Gossip is Top Notch**, a conversation with artist and scholar **Clint Enns**, the Nigerian-born, Winnipeg-based filmmaker and photographer reflects on spirituality, community, and his artistic practice, which blends cultural influences with striking visual sensibility. Their dialogue reveals a shared spirit of discovery and a deep appreciation for the history of film and photography.

Cole Thompson's feature, **Be Careful, the Top Plate is Very Hot or The Death and Life of Licensed Family Restaurants**, explores taste in its precognitive state: affect. Beginning with a visceral recollection of food poisoning, Thompson examines how this raw energy might inform a writing practice, concluding with a reflection on the architecture of licensed family restaurants—spaces that are both familiar and strangely elusive.

The role of technology in influencing taste is a critical thread throughout this issue. **Juan Ortiz-Apuy's** project **SHIRLEY CARDS: A History of Photography's Bias** critiques the myth of technological neutrality through thrifted Kodak colour cards, exposing the biases behind the lens. In a feature titled **Tastes Like Abundance**, writer and curator **Noor Bhangu** explores how AI's mainstream adoption is reshaping the archive, and how artists navigate the tensions between technology's risks and creative potential. **Rah Eleh's** augmented reality project included in this issue embodies this critically attuned approach to technology, drawing inspiration from her work, **Celestial Throne**. The project cleverly uses the format of Jeopardy to unveil the coded language prevalent in red-pilled online subcultures. To access the clues, you can download the free app Artivive here: https://apps.apple.com/us/app/artivive/id1188737494.

As an art writer, I'm acutely aware of how endangered arts publications in Canada have become. My aim with this issue was to create space for the kind of writing I want to see more of: writing that interprets the world through visual culture, provides context, and delivers critically engaged perspectives.

I'm deeply grateful to *BlackFlash* for entrusting me with the editorial content of this issue. Special thanks to Travis Cole, Interim Director/Publisher, and Breanne Bandur, Board Chair, for their integral roles in shaping this issue; my colleague Scott Fitzpatrick for his relentless probing of his own (flawless) taste, which inspired the theme; Emilie Neudorf for her sharp design; Michael Pace for incisive copy editing; Carmelle Pretzlaw for thorough proofreading; the editorial committee and board for their insights; and, of course, the contributors for sharing their remarkable work. BF

Madeline Bogoch, Guest Editor, BlackFlash Issue 41.3

Top: Lily Jue Sheng 盛珏 *Heritage Architecture*, 2024. Film still. Early 20th century replica of New World Plaza (Nanjing West Road at Xizang Road). Image courtesy of the artist.

SOME CALL IT DIY, OTHERS CALL IT WORKERS' CONTROL:

Interview with Lily Jue Sheng

By Steff Huì Cí Ling

Last summer, Lily invited me to moderate the Q&A for a retrospective of their films at Anthology Film Archives. For me, Q&As have always seemed like a strange post-screening ritual where a filmmaker talks to a programmer, critic, or another filmmaker from anywhere between five and twenty minutes, and even though most of the time nothing really gets said, everyone always seems really happy after the fact. Lily knows I feel this way. Apparently, this sort of feeling is why we get along, even though my "job" as a freelance critic or curator is to sort the art world's labour market on a mercenary basis by assigning value or employability to certain works or artists over others. Further to that point, the fact that I objectively understand the freelance critic or curator as a kind of manager in the production of bourgeois culture is why we are comrades. So, when they asked me to moderate, I knew the assignment was to bring working-class politics into a public discussion of their films, grounding them in the sites of labour and struggle that Lily has been part of throughout their life as a worker and organizer. In many ways, this interview is an extension of that inherently limited conversation, compounded with many others we have had in our study group, at art worker gatherings, and while we workshop theories and strategies of organizing from our respective sites in this virtually unorganized sector.

Steff Huì Cí Ling (SHCL): Could you talk about how you framed your last screening at Anthology Film Archives, which is also where you work? Let's start with the title.

Lily Jue Sheng (LJS): For those unfamiliar, Anthology is a theatre and archive focused on avant-garde, independent, and experimental film located in the East Village, New York City. I went with the title "Work and Place in the Workplace" for a single-filmmaker program that took place on June 6th and screened six of my short artist films. I have been working there on and off, starting as a technician, and presently as a theatre worker, for exactly one decade.

The title is a play on the words "work," "place," and "workplace," chosen to evoke one's concept of and relationship to these categories, such as my own with these films. They recreate places I visit and revisit in my day-to-day life, in addition to the affective and sensory qualities I associate with being there. Their production and semiotics emerge from labour infrastructures I can easily and cost-effectively navigate given my vocation. These conditions make it possible for me to work, but I recognize how it's still beholden to the history and rules inside a bourgeois cultural market.

The title plays with pulling the curtain back to draw attention to my position on work, especially undervalued work and wage theft. Cinema and artistic work activities are necessarily mystified to fuel a culture industry running on free and underpaid labour. The activities of your practice, at least if you're a working-class artist/filmmaker, are largely a form of wage theft that you're deeply conditioned to feel grateful for. The activities of the wage labour you do get paid for is notoriously low if you work in or adjacent to the culture industry. It's less taboo to address publicly these days, but there's a pervasive backwardness to maintain the current system—that regression is coming from a place of precariousness. There's the same deep conditioning in our jobs, in which we believe our jobs are unique. The idea that we should just be grateful that they exist at all, or as you worded it in your essay, "In praise of hockey players on canvas," that belief in art is a prerequisite to exploitation.[1]

Pg 4 (bottom): Lily Jue Sheng 盛珏 *Heritage Architecture*, 2024. Film still. The view from my uncle's shaitai (sun terrace). Image courtesy of the artist.

Lily Jue Sheng 盛珏, *Heritage Architecture*, 2024. Film still. Xiahai Chenghuang (City God) Temple. Image courtesy of the artist.

SHCL: What has pulling back that curtain looked like for you? You've said in a previous conversation that political consciousness takes patience; it takes a prolonged and focused examination of the social quality of one's work within the past, present, and future of capitalism. How has your political consciousness developed as a film worker?

LJS: The short answer is that I stay plugged into organizing, as well as cinema and culture sector work. Sometimes different communities do work together; a lot of the time they don't. It's all good, and I learn a lot.

The long answer is that many activities in artistic practice are the same as any other kind of worker. By worker, I don't only mean employed participants of society receiving wages. Much like the race- and gender-oppressed, undocumented, elderly, disabled, and youth, cultural labour falls within the reserve army of labour. A working-class artist or cultural worker carries untapped energy. As a filmmaker and worker, categories I find to mean the same thing, I have little control over my working time and circulation in a bourgeois cultural market. I'm restoring my control when I build the world I want to live in with the tools I already have. In an earlier time, people called this DIY. Given the cyclical motions of past, present, and future crises manufactured by capitalism, the evolution of DIY is making proactive decisions to do a variety of activities that may fall outside the purview of film production—like organizing.

Filmmakers can take back control of their work. What that looks like for me is developing working-class contexts and communities. However, it rarely works to transform your art into your activism because the cultural market transforms it into astroturfing.[2] I don't individually produce films about labour organizing for this reason. Instead, my principles as an organizer remain close to my individual film practice which reflects my broader social development.

SHCL: How do you trace the social development of your work starting from your earliest films? Are there any moments in conception, production, or presentation where political consciousness has intersected with cultural work?

LJS: I will trace it over four films: *Mercurial Matter* (2014), *Force Majeure* (2015), *Change* (2017), and *Heritage Architecture* (2024), especially the historical context and references in the last two.

The tensions in these films move from more abstract to documentary, albeit in a non-linear progression. I produced *Mercurial Matter* and *Force Majeure* at a time when I was fixated on rephotographing film (optical printing, lowbrow re-recording, and scanning techniques), the films I watched in college, the films of Stom Sogo that I watched every day at my job, and the music that raised me long before film. My attitude in making them mirrored Stom's, insofar as he said, "I try not to have a message or even word in my movie. But I usually have some sick stories behind each of the movies."[3] So, typical of the things artists believe and say in their mid-20s after art school indoctrination.

I wasn't concerned with the things I'm now saying when I produced *Change* a couple of years later. The process of producing *Change* consisted of reading, copying, and consulting the *I Ching* (Book of Changes), the Chinese body clock and calendars. It's in the chronology of logographs, the incremental layers and split logic, and *Change's* makeshift status as an object where an unstable set of social relations can be traced out of the film's contents. One of the most notable aspects is the unstable chronology, like the totality of time moving from the agrarian feudal era to the Cold War and beyond in under 6 minutes. My texts are more succinct when producing energetically polemical films in comparison to conversations and writing. At the same time, the film's contents are more symbolic and not a predetermined critique of the film industrial complex. I did historical research, but I don't approach research with a specific critical inquiry that I plan to bake into the film and argue for. That's closer to how I behave as an organizer, but with artist films, it's not my goal to make the contents ideologically and materially on the nose.

SHCL: When you refer to the symbols in *Change*, you mean the ideographic qualities of Chinese characters flashing intermittently as your reverberating voice reads them out loud alongside instrument and drum tracks. I'm trying to describe (for the readers) how the sensorial quality connects with the linguistic symbolism.

LJS: *Change* and my artist films are closer to poems, composed music, or a sensory environment than directed short films. It's why I add "artist" in front of "film," even though I mostly screen them, and rarely install them in exhibitions. *Change* is a bit of an anomaly; it's stylistically strange, but popular among a wide mix of viewers. Audiences who have and haven't been indoctrinated into "experimental film" receive it with—the good kind of—curiosity. However, the majority of viewers also struggle to understand its broader historical context.

Historically, *Change* has only ever circulated in what we could call an "alternative economy." When it comes to screening opportunities, I don't pay to work, so I don't submit to a lot of film festivals. Recently, it's gone beyond a festival circuit's shelf life: it screened last year with comrades in "Not For Sale: Material Traces of Protest in Chinatown & LES, 2002–Present," in a film program titled "ENCAMPMENT-OCCUPATION" at the first New York Counter Film Festival, and also streamed with Ultra Dogme, a collectively run online film journal and cinema. I'm in solidarity and struggle alongside the people who organized these programs or screened their work.

SHCL: Initially, *Heritage Architecture* can appear like an aesthetic travelogue treated with essayistic editing, but there is a cache of references that speak to the political economy of filmmaking.

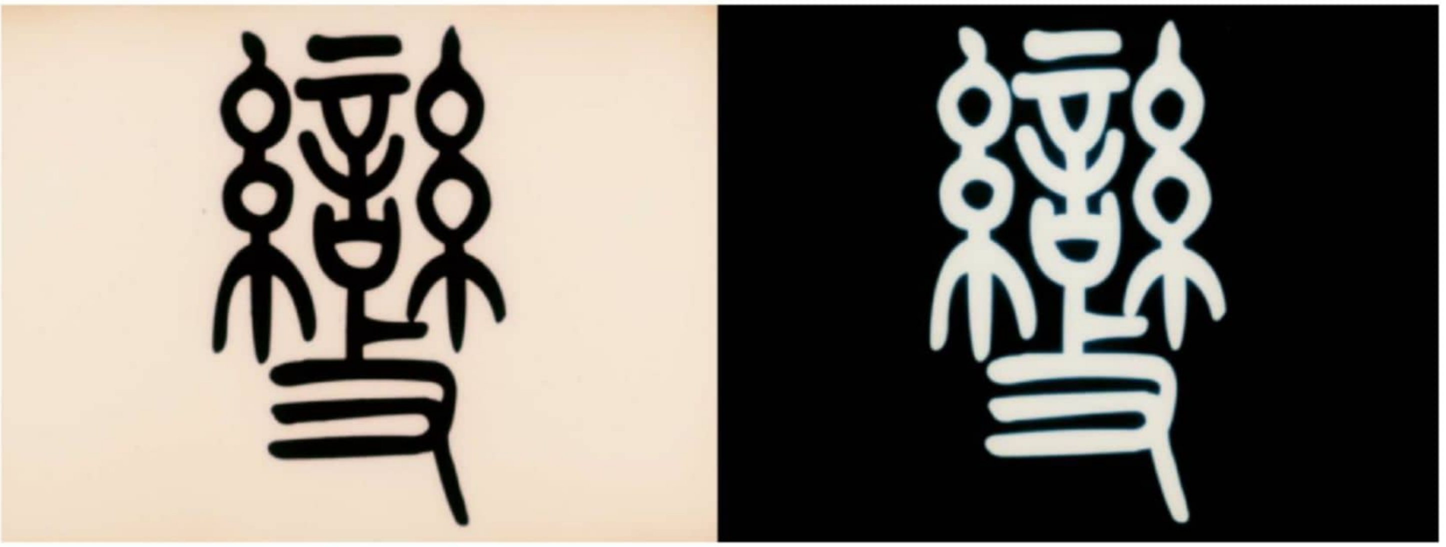
LJS: *Heritage Architecture* is a landscape film. The scenes show cultural and commercial sites located in Shanghai, where I was born, and parts of Northern Taiwan where I know people. It heavily draws from Masao Adachi's *A.K.A. Serial Killer* (1975). *Heritage Architecture* encapsulates this region I habitually go to every few years, accumulating records of the same few places that change but also don't change in between my trips. The film was shot in the summer of 2023.

I researched Japanese-constructed architecture before shooting, especially Hongkou, Shanghai's lane housing streets and Taipei's commercial districts. I also returned to an exercise I picked up from the late filmmaker Jonathan Schwartz: in-camera editing with 100-ft rolls of film. *Heritage Architecture* plays over three rolls.

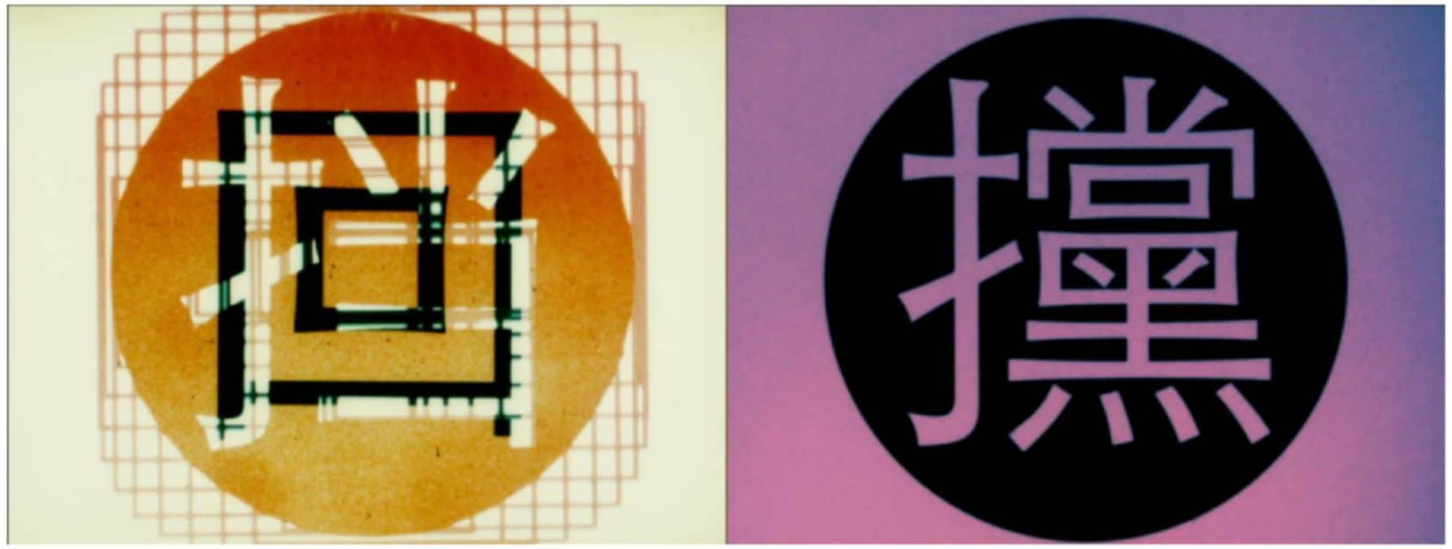
I came up with the title *Heritage Architecture* after watching my footage, as it cites the heritage conservation of buildings, and in Shanghai, it reifies the petite bourgeois memory of alleyway homes. Architectural styles that appear are longtang, lilong, and shikumen. Jie Li's *Shanghai Homes: Palimpsests of Private Life* was another influential reference. My aunt's block, my uncle's block, Lu Xun Park, a Lao Shanghai-themed "street" food court, a neighbourhood's worth of condemned houses, and the Bund appear in the first roll. Taiwan's tourism is driven by street markets and the spiritual economy of local temples. Taipei's oldest commercial district features a small City God temple, the main religious icon remaining in Old Shanghai. Daxi Old Street and Keelung's Ghost Festival water lantern ceremony are scenes in the second roll.

A Maiden's Prayer is the melody in the final roll. The song signifies being in Taiwan and taking out your trash. It plays over every scene on Dihua Street. Semi-public, semi-private pedestrian chatter plays over eminent domain properties around Hongkou and film sets inside Shanghai Chedun Film Park. The rhythm of in-camera editing and on-location sound breaks here. It reproduces the hauntologies these places are charged with through national heritage architecture. This film is not agitprop, but the ebb and flow of personal, historical, and structural content that weaves politics with art. It's similar to how Trinh T. Minh-ha framed her films in opposition to the armchair anthropological documentary but was cognizant that the film's surface resembles the ethnographic films she's criticizing, and that she works in the academy. I'm also arguing that the primacy should not be on what a film looks like.

That being said, I'm not trying to synthesize revolution in my individual practice. I'm autistic; I pick up the vibes from the surrounding environment more organically than the subtext of social exchanges I have with most people. My films have strong animist sensibilities, but I want to talk about it like a historical materialist.



Top: Lily Jue Sheng 盛珏, *Change*, 2017. Film still. A double 16mm projection, optically printed characters read bian "change" in Chinese seal script, L: black text on white, R: white text on black.



Bottom: Lily Jue Sheng 盛珏, *Change*, 2017. Film Still. A double 16mm projection, optically printed characters read hui "to return", and dang "to resist". L: Simplified Chinese text overlayed in orange, white, black, containing a circle and gridded patterns. R: Traditional Chinese text, purple text inside a black circle with a purple background.

SHCL: In the past, we've debated what we think "proletarian art" is even though we still live in a bourgeois society. Your films have a proletarian standpoint and remain necessarily in an exchange relation with capital, or rather capital's surplus. I'm interested in discussing the tension between working-class intention and the bourgeois context. I do see a lot of working-class culture being produced in working-class spaces, but they don't circulate in the same way that bourgeois culture circulates in bourgeois spaces. You're operating in both working-class and bourgeois contexts, and there is a war of position happening there as you stake some degree of agency around how your work is understood. This is tied to how your labour is understood, and that is a kind of workers' control.

LJS: Thanks so much for connecting the dots. Here's my position—the working class is forced to sell our labour to capitalists for a wage. There are such things as professional revolutionaries and organizations that build worker-operated structures, but producing working-class culture for the most part doesn't pay your bills. The question of what is "proletarian art" isn't relevant if, at the end of the day, I'm still forced to work for capitalists in order to not die.

I become social when I organize with all kinds of workers. The division of labour separates workers by skills and hours, which is a process that deskills and devalues labour. In the culture sector, the belief that art possesses intrinsic social value divides labour between those who produce artistic work and those who manage artistic presentations in a bourgeois context. The contradiction is that the workers who produce culture and the workers who manage the production of culture are both precarious, forming two divisions of the working class who are forced to sell their labour and reproduce capitalist culture. This doesn't mean that we should indiscriminately organize with all managerial workers, but rather that those in proximity to authority who share similar economic circumstances should develop solidarity with other workers, instead of capital.[4] My argument is that practicing artists and workers in the culture industry who want dignity and protections for our labour should organize and fight for them. This is a process of becoming coherent as working-class people who can join the broader labour movement.

Workers' control connects to what I said earlier about controlling your historical context, and where and how my work is recognized since the bourgeoisie write history. It's also about building alternative economies—a term we've discussed in the town hall and working group meetings. It means exactly what it sounds like, it's an alternative to the bourgeois economy. Alternative economies won't pay your bills either; in practice, it's temporary and underdeveloped because being forced to work for capitalists keeps us busy and tired. The "Means of Production" exhibition [the show I organized as part of the collective Lunch Hour] is a working example of how it plays out. When working artists pool their skills, knowledge, and access to space, materials, and equipment, it offers a glimpse of what our collective historical potential could be. In that sense, *working-class* artists have a role to play. Artists can be duplicitous and a textbook definition of the petite bourgeoisie, and while the class one gets dealt in life is crucial to understand and be aware of, it's not fixed.

SHCL: We have talked about a bourgeois aesthetic. A bourgeois aesthetic is facilitated through bourgeois relations, bringing bourgeois sensibilities into spaces where organizing and other progressive ideas are emphasized. Your work seems to develop within working-class relations yet circulate within a bourgeois structure. Within institutions that possess a sense of prestige, you're emphasizing your relationship to that place as a worker who emerges with an economic analysis of it as a work site. One way a working-class artist can deconstruct bourgeois aesthetics or infrastructures is by going through them and understanding them thoroughly, but what are some ways that you might have tried to model different production or presentation opportunities?

LJS: I think bourgeois ideology is when the press releases say "blurring the boundaries" because it blurs the boundaries of class, and then we get this feeling of being "honoured" by getting collected, curated, reviewed, etc. This follows the logic of pleasing management because you're just trying to climb the corporate ladder. This dynamic reproduces a top-down structure that drives bourgeois production at these institutions. Why would I try to work with upper management masquerading as a rainbow coalition when they represent rainbow imperialism? Why would you want to be valued by these institutions that are culturally reproducing the genocide and occupation in Palestine expanding to Lebanon, Yemen, and Syria through inaction and silence? This culture is built from the intensified labour, health, housing, and environmental crises unfolding right here, in the imperial core.

To the question of different models, for "Means of Production" Lunch Hour developed a call for submissions and accepted every proposal we received. Just to be clear—I'm not a *feel-good liberal*—I tried a collectivized method to figure out where workers are at. Eighty artists or collectives participated in the exhibition, but fifteen artists from the show attended the art workers' town hall or general assembly program. In the process, I have concretely identified who the workers are and found another fifty workers who attended in the interest of organizing.

The way I would put it is you can experiment: artists' film practice and the circulation of that film in public is part of the superstructure, so it's not the activity that's going to transform society, but there's nothing wrong with experimentation attacking the superstructure either. An artist's practice is also a platform to reach people, and you should use every tool at your disposal. I don't know if anything I do on my own is revolutionary, but I've noticed that if you're a worker or a member of the masses, you can talk to other workers. I make my collective appeals directly to the working masses, and I know they hear me.

SHCL: Anything else you want to say to the workers while you're here?

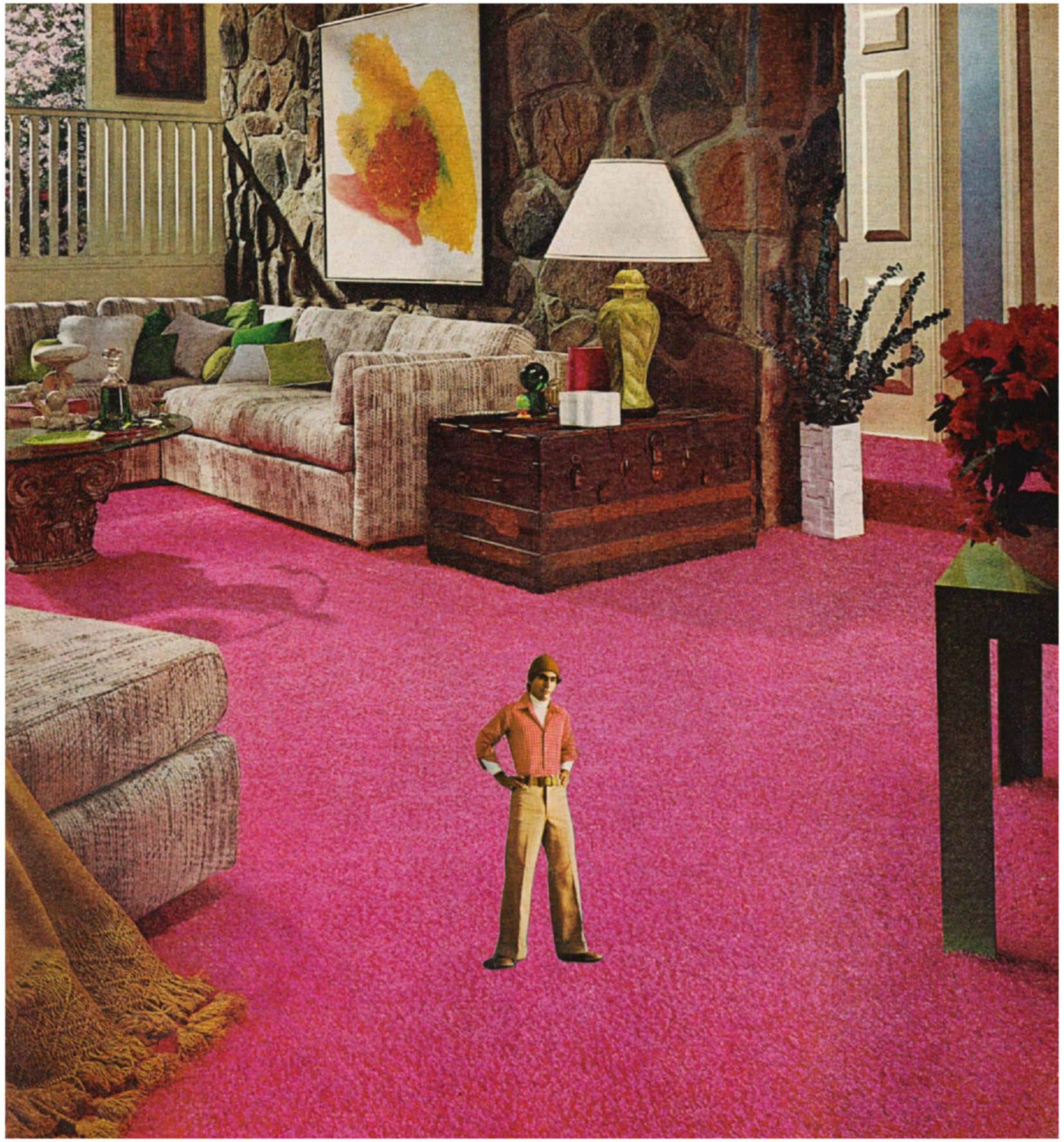
LJS: ARTISTS, FILMMAKERS, AND CULTURAL PRODUCERS MUST RESIST AND FIGHT AS WORKERS FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE WORKING CLASS, NOT IN SERVICE OF, BUT ALONGSIDE THE RESISTANCE AND FIGHT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE!

***Steff Huì Cí Ling* 林惠慈** *is a cultural worker, labour researcher, and occasional critic and film programmer living as a guest on the unceded territories of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Sə̓lílwətaʔ / Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations.*

***Lily Jue Sheng* 盛珏** *is an artist/filmmaker, cinema worker, and organizer local to New York City and New Jersey (Lënapehòkink).*

Notes

1. Steff Huì Cí Ling, "In praise of hockey players on canvas: Artworkers from class division to new solidarities," *Relssue*, November 12, 2023, https://reissue.pub/articles/in-praise-of-hockey-players-on-canvas-artworkers-from-class-division-to-new-solidarities.
2. Paraphrasing a text message from Amy Ching-Yan Lam on October 11, 2024. There are principled exceptions, such as artist Siyan Wong's "Lives of Three Canners: New York's Chinese Elderly Immigrants" exhibition in 2023. Astroturfing is a term that refers to something manufactured but fashions itself as "grassroots"'— for example employing activist rhetoric or models to market or sell a commodity.
3. Stom Stogo and Andrew Lampert, "Stom Sogo and Andrew Lampert," *BOMB Magazine*, April 3, 2013, bombmagazine.org/articles/2013/04/04/stom-sogo-and-andrew-lampert.
4. Steff has written about how proximity to authority can be a barrier to solidarity between art workers despite shared economic circumstances: "In praise of hockey players on canvas: Artworkers from class division to new solidarities," *RelSsue*, November 12, 2023.



Small Husband, 2019

PERVERSE LUXURY

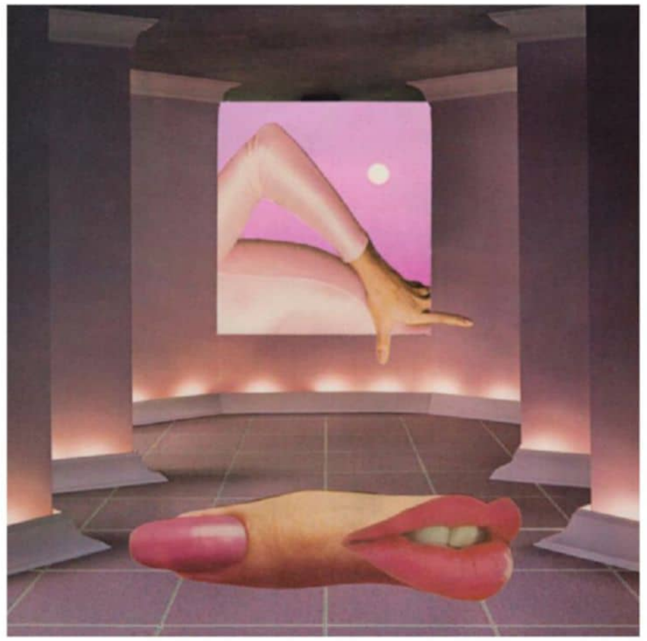
By Phomohobes

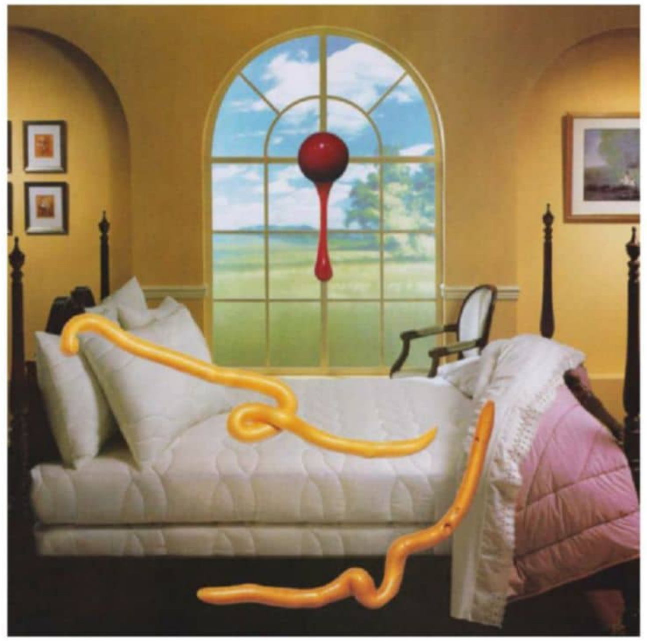
I spent a good portion of my childhood by myself, quietly flipping through fashion and interior design magazines. Born in the late '70s, being both working class and latently queer, I was in an ideal position to be intoxicated by the images of opulence on display in issues of *House & Garden*, *Architectural Digest*, and *Cosmopolitan*. I was not yet savvy enough to decode the notions of "good taste" espoused in these publications as inexorably linked to wealth and class, though I sensed that actually inhabiting these supposedly tasteful interiors would be stifling and restrictive. These impeccable rooms were designed to be photographed more than lived in, similar to how the garish power suits for upwardly mobile women of the era looked as uncomfortable as they did glamorous. I was just a messy kid who could never occupy these pristine, highly-mannered spaces, but my conflicted fascination with '80s images of wealthy white luxury remained. The push/pull attraction/alienation to images of lifestyles beyond my reach informs a lot of the work we make as Phomohobes and how we approach (and subvert) the extravagance of our sources.

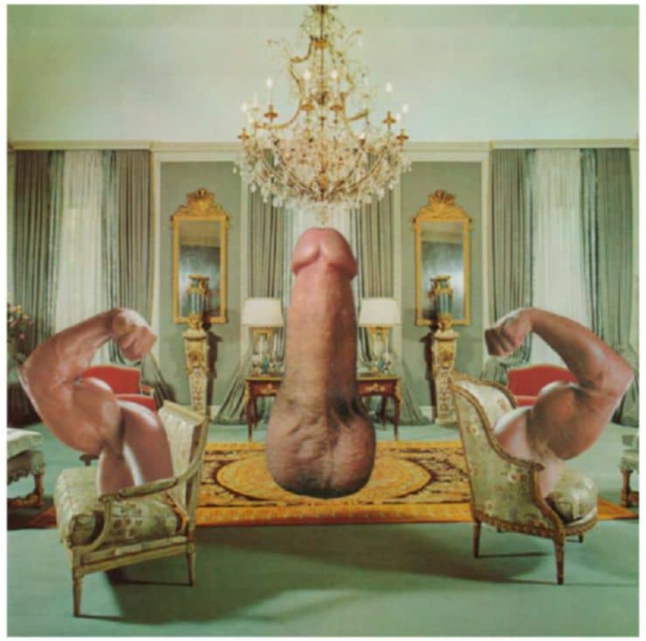
Growing up in the '90s, Colby has a much different relationship to the shameless excess found in the magazines we pull images from. He has a less complicated access point into this world of a past he didn't experience first-hand. This variation in proximity is integral to our methodology of image-making. We are drawn to our source material out of a mutual fascination, appreciation, and morbid curiosity. For both of us, the collages provide a space to simultaneously celebrate and satirize mainstream notions of taste and sophistication. We get to poke fun at the aesthetics of the past but also to pay tribute (albeit in a subversive, gaudy, and often humorous way). The collages present an ambiguous and imaginative afterlife for advertising imagery, one that is not completely detached from its glossy origin, but in conversation with it. There is, interestingly, an extent to which our collages can be easily enjoyed on a purely aesthetic level, devoid of criticality, much like the "décor art" that populated the home interiors photographed for *Architectural Digest*. However, I don't think either of us would be satisfied with this surface-level reading of our work alone. For us, each collage needs to hint at some kind of narrative, however cryptic and perverse it might appear.

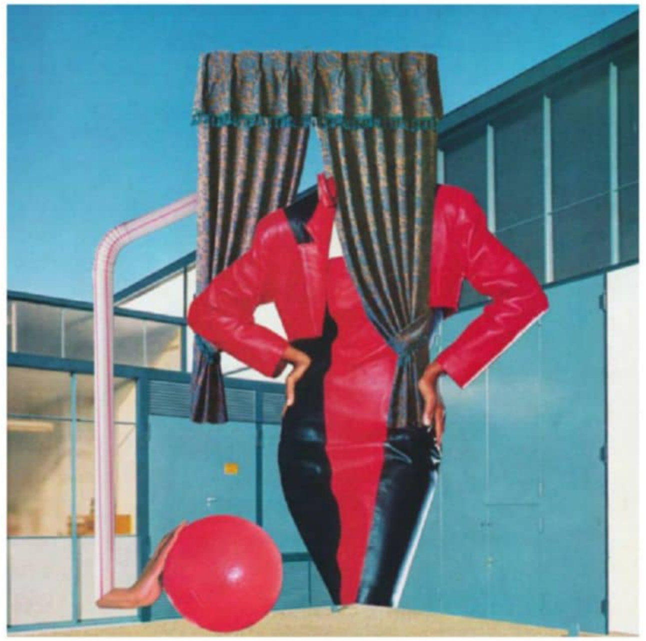
***Phomohobes** are a duo comprised of Colby Richardson (Toronto) and Jason Cawood (Regina.) Formed in 2012, they primarily create hand-made collages from pre-1990's pop-culture and lifestyle magazines. These collages take shape as garish, ornate and perverse juxtapositions of mid-20th century interiors, fashion, consumer products, decontextualized body parts, and hypermasculinity.*

Pgs 10-15: Phomohobes, collages. Images courtesy of the artists.

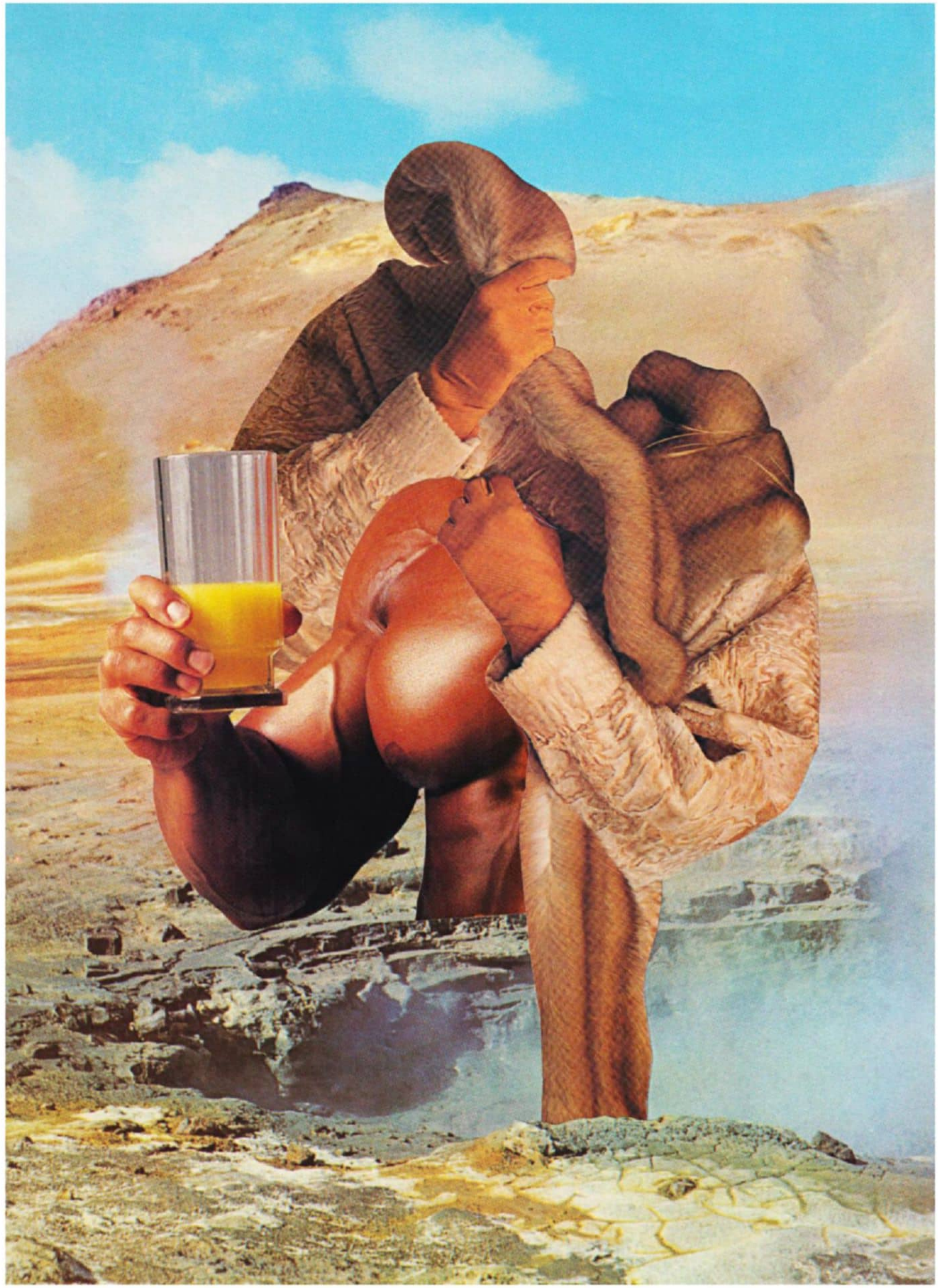




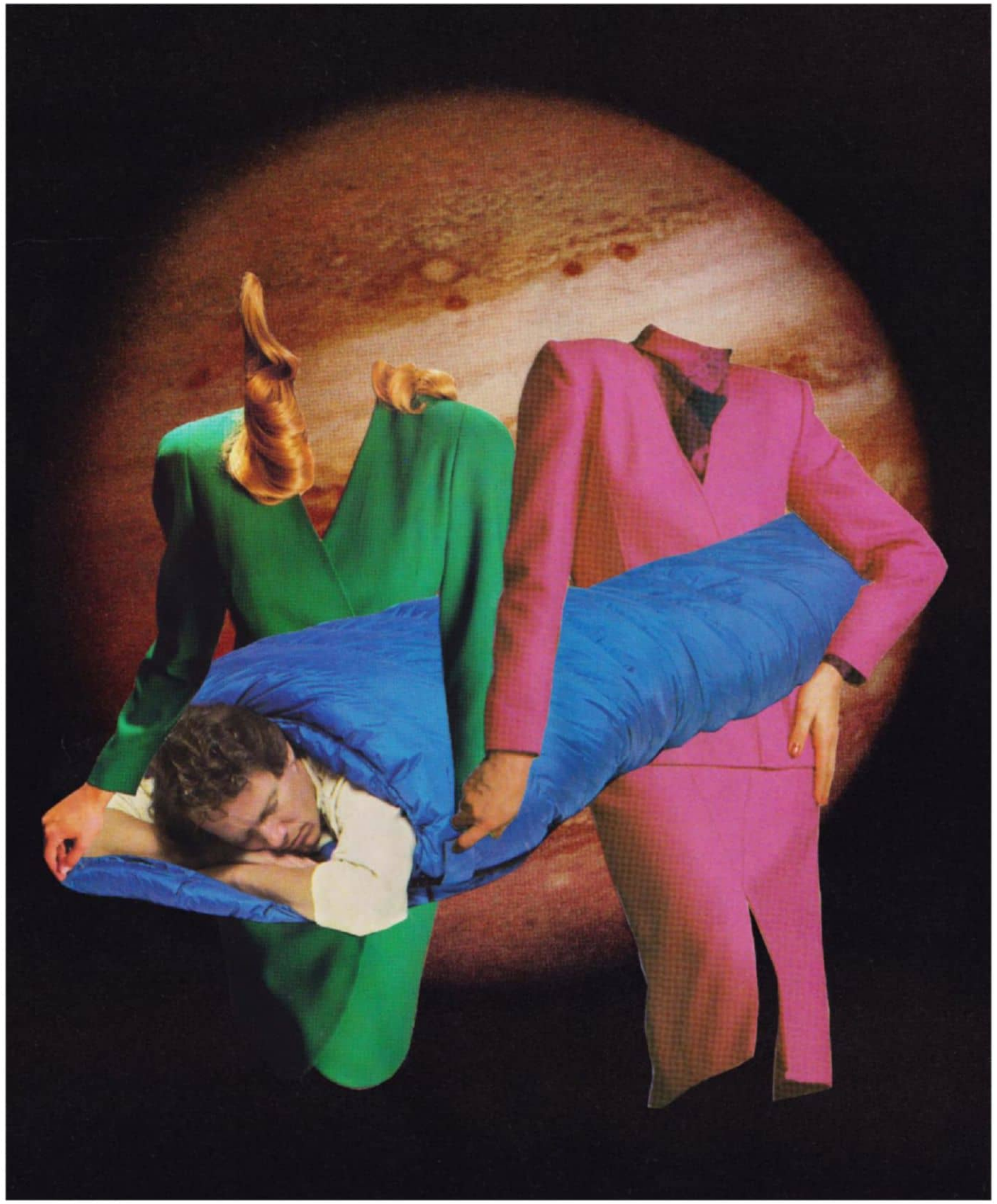




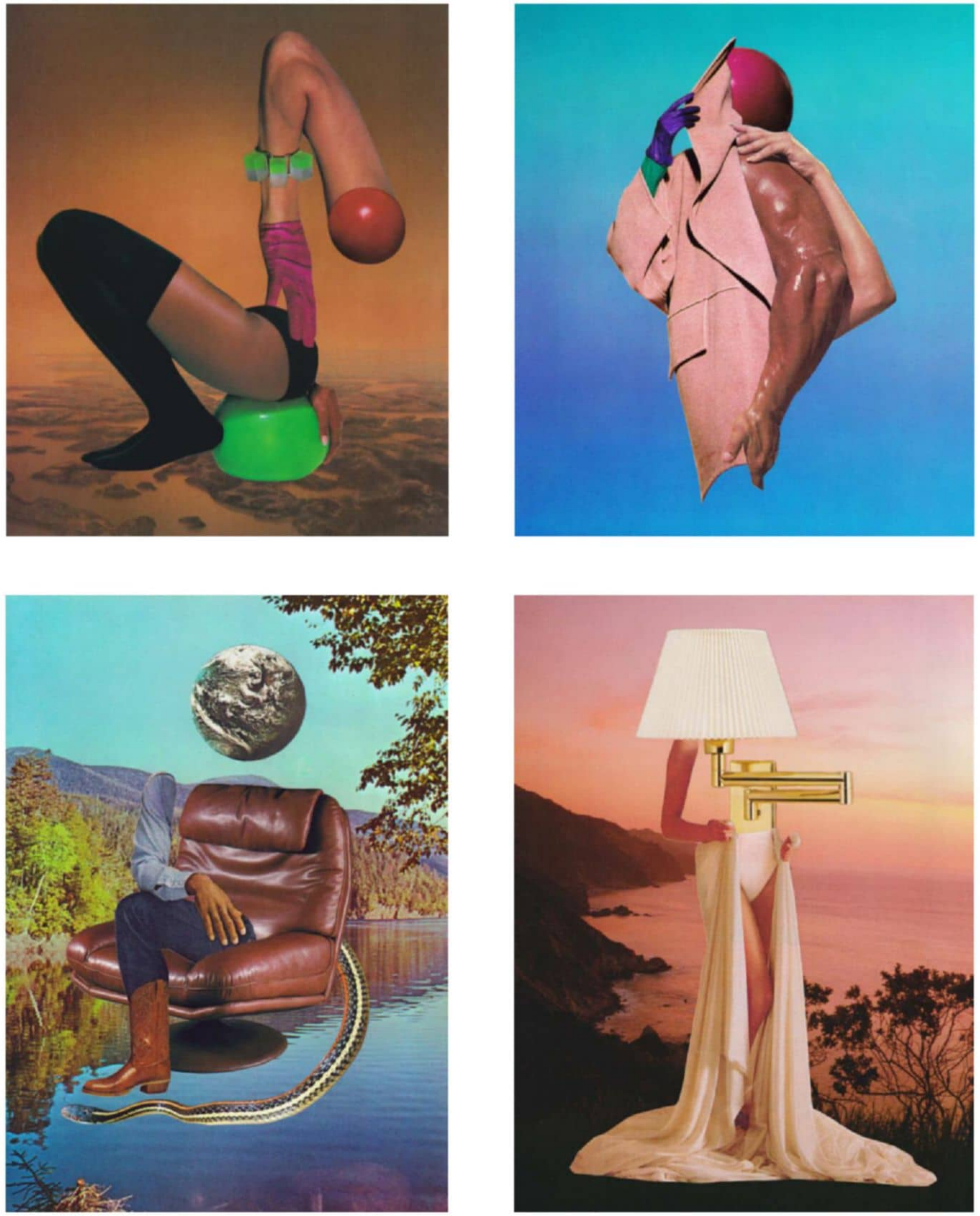
Clockwise from top left
Fingerlips at Home, 2017. *Excretions at Home*, 2021. *Masculine Interior*, 2014. *Machine Glamour Prototype*, 2024.



Tempting Offer, 2024



Support System, 2021



Clockwise from top left
Safety Procedure, 2021. *Exterior Interior*, 2022. *Earth Chair Snake man*, 2021. *Linda*, 2024.

Marion Nicoll, *Sundogs*, 1976. (Detail) Clay print on paper. Art Gallery of Alberta Collection, purchased with funds from the Soper Endowment.

g Payce, *SSSSSSS*, 2000. (Detail) Ceramic. Art Gallery of Alberta Collection, gift of the Artist.

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KIKI'S MY LADY

Kiera Boult, *Hamilton's My Lady*, 2024. Installation photo. Photo by Amy Su. Image courtesy of Centre[3].

KIKI DISHES IT OUT:

Kiera Boult's performance art practice

By Luther Konadu

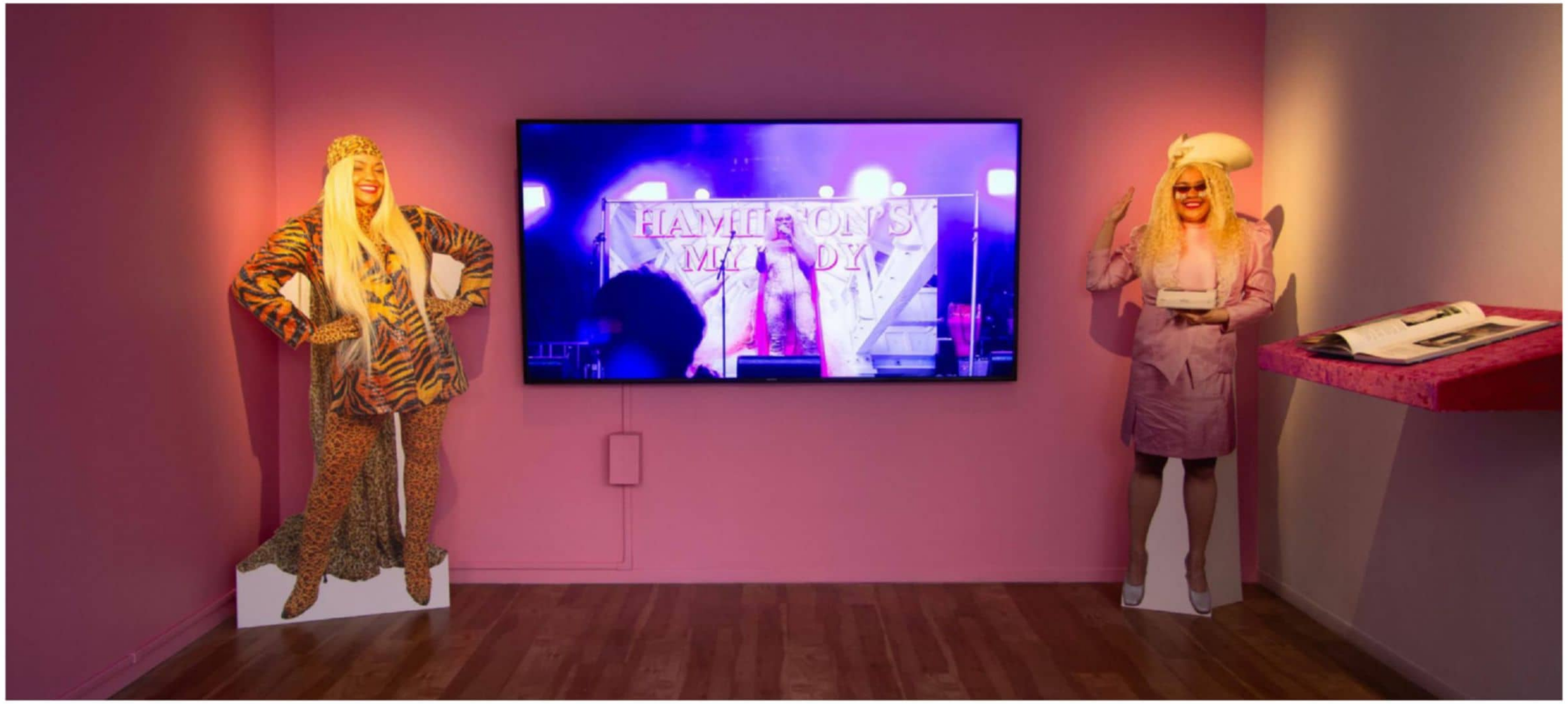
She could be the biracial offspring of Wendy Williams and Dolly Parton. Oprah Winfrey's earlier vivacious talk-show-host dynamism is also in the mix. There are strands of Andrea Fraser's satirical verve or even online baiter, Ziwe. She's a composite figure containing bits of the moneyed, spectacle-driven reality TV housewives from the past decade. Despite these ranging antecedents, the 'she' here is a unique construction of the artist Kiera Boult's own making. This "she" goes by Kiki. The first thing Kiki will likely share about herself upon first interaction is that she's from Hamilton, Ontario. It's her proverbial playground, and she'll gleefully offer you a welcome tour. The post-industrial port city has been as much a stage for Kiki's zany (mis)adventures as it is a protagonist in Boult's creative output. More on this later.

Kiki is Boult's realized fantasy. Among other characteristics, she is an unreliable narrator, a heightened version of the artist's subconscious, and a political fault-finder. Kiki is ultimately someone Boult hasn't yet resolved and thus, an open canvas to be continuously explored. Kiki's trajectory all began as a scene kid at Boult's high school, long before she became the creative vehicle Boult would make her into. When Boult subsequently enrolled at Ontario College of Art and Design, Kiki reappeared anew through class projects. By the end of Boult's time in the program, Kiki had developed into an artistic strategy of sorts, tricked out with her own curated visual presence. Having Kiki become a creative project was, for Boult, a way to explore the potential of being an artist without needing to draw or paint, skills that eluded her. It was a strategy for navigating the conventions of art school and, in doing so, discovering the terms of her artistic agency.

In one class project, she had to re-create a canonical performance in art history, so she chose one by Vito Acconci. She couldn't recall the exact piece when I asked her its title, but she described a vivid memory of Acconci's forthright engagement with the viewer through the camera. In Boult's version, instead of a performance for the camera, she chose the bustling streets of Toronto as her live audience. She adopted her Kiki avatar and started the performance piece without much of a plan, merely inviting onlookers to lay with her in public on her sleeping bag. To her surprise, some of the strangers indulged her.

This earlier phase in Kiera's performance-based practice evinces an innate fearlessness in the face of the watchful gaze of a live audience. It is the same sense of agency that would bolster Kiki and her travails in the years that followed. Speaking with the artist, it is clear the public stage never impedes that internal agency, and being at the centre of everyone's gaze is where she thrives. Reflecting on her performance in the streets of Toronto, she admits it optically reads as cosplaying houselessness and is an instance of Kiki's problematics—an effect of her sense of unfiltered "hubris," she tells me, and perhaps a trace of the artist's subconscious. This same overbearing hubris will drive Boult years later to orchestrate a live gallery performance to publicly oust and defang Kiki in the piece *Kiki Gets Cancelled* (2019).

Kiki Gets Cancelled is an illustration of Boult's not-very PR-friendly, critically reflexive relationship with Kiki. She wasn't a mere guise Boult performed through anymore. Kiki evolved to become one of the targets of Boult's conflicted and antagonistic relationship with the institutional art world and the larger cultural and sociopolitical ecosystem from which Kiki emerged and operates in. In many ways, Kiki has created an avenue for harnessing the artist's sense of agency and freedom. However, Boult never intended her to be pure or free from any snafus. Kiki was modelled after the parasocial connections she formed with some of the aforementioned celebrities who were cultural fixtures growing up in the aughts. In conversation with Boult, she gushes over TV/radio host Wendy Williams, "I get emotional just thinking about her." The celebrities she bonded with were often women with larger-than-life personalities. They radiated unfettered



self-conviction, which held a valuable fascination for Boult. It resonated with a dormant part of her—the part she perhaps couldn't always broadcast but recognized in these celebrities' personas. Kiki was crafted with everything celebrities had, including entourages, personal chefs, behind-the-scenes docuseries, stalkers, and NDAs. Kiki became the total package of the people's princess. This also means she shares some of the same mishandling of cultural power as her celebrity predecessors, mired in legal trouble or bound by an NDA.

Dolled up in undiluted pinks, sequins, leopard prints, wigs, and other props, Kiki made naive any suppositions that may define her ethics through her ebullient aesthetics. In performance pieces like *The Truth Booth: Art is the New Steal* (2014), *So You Think You Can Truth?* (2016), *#Teamkiki (For Institutional Use Only)* (2018), *Shop the Solidarity Collection* (2018), and the *Cold Reads and Hot Takes* series (2022), Boult highlights with flair the many internal contradictions, systemic biases, emotionally manipulative dynamics, and skewed politics of the art world. Several of these performances were live and took the form of stand-up comedy roasts and slideshow presentations. As polemical a position as Kiki's voice took, her delivery was invariably leavened by its satirical panache. Some of these presentations, like the *Truth Booth* series, were performed in her own curated fuchsia-adorned kiosks. Its aesthetics and intentions are in line with the DIY culture-jamming characteristic of the Guerrilla Girls' earlier subversive interventions. They recall today's clickbaity visuals, but Kiki deploys them to drive audiences' attention to her hot takes. Referring to themselves as "Truthrz," Kiki and her assisting facilitators take on the role of conspiracy theorists and, among their campaigning agenda, regale the public with theories about artists' roles in enabling a neoliberal economy.

In conversation with Boult, she expresses her belief in Black conspiracy theorists, describing Wendy Williams as their north star and her signature on-air conjectures as based in reality. "A lot of what she talks about ends up coming out as true." Beneath Kiki's puckish guise as one of the Truthrz is an affinity toward a long history of radical Black skepticism to which Boult aligns with Williams. Black skepticism is an instinctive communal philosophy that stems from living under an oppressive state that often regards Black lives in negligible terms. For the Black skeptic, official truths are to be distrusted and never to be fully accepted at face value. As a survival mechanism and a form of self-empowerment, the Black skeptic critically speculates and seeks alternate narratives and truths. Boult, posing as a glammed-up conspiracy theorist, engages in an oppositional play against external domineering influence. Inherent in the *Truth Booth* series, *So You Think You Can Truth*, and several of Boult's other performances is an itch to rupture the business-as-usual position of the cultural environment in which she is embroiled. This discontent drives her to challenge and hold the status quo in question.

Several of Boult's performances over the years (including the aforementioned works) have taken place in various performance art festivals and settings like Hamilton's highly attended Supercrawl, an outdoor art and cultural festival. In large part, the critically reflexive contents of her performances, even when she was a resident in Toronto, are a result of her roots as a Hamiltonian. Nicknamed "The Hammer" for its preeminent steel industry past and the working class population, the city of Hamilton has been undergoing urban rebranding. This comes after decades of decay and disinvestment during its de-industrialization fade-out late in the previous century. The gentrification policies that have ensued incentivize private venture capitalists from Toronto and elsewhere to fill its economic void. This included driving out low-income residents from the once-affordable neighbourhoods and, in their stead, erecting smart condos, parking lots, and overpriced vegan restaurants. The new slogan, "Art is the New Steel," emerged as part of attempts to attract businesses to the ever-ballooning art Supercrawl.

The slogan and the urban redevelopment it references also became the title and subject of one of Kiki's Truthrz canvassing brochures: *Art is the New Steal: Appropriating the Hamilton Landscape* (2016). During an event in conjunction with Supercrawl, Boult set up one of her embellished booths, offering the public what she called "The Myth of the Creative Class Grief Therapy," her wry humour present as always. In the years that followed, Kiki would also perform her stand-up variety special, *Hamilton is My Lady* (2022), at the crawl on an elevated stage for hundreds. In her characteristic radiant pink, Kiki donned a cape-like outfit, resembling a comic-book hero tasked with entertaining the crowd while speaking truth to power. As she's always done, her performances in this mixed crowd setting struck a delicate balance of poking at the very real effects of the city's desperate attempts to become a hipster wonderland and the inherent absurdity in this. Each iteration of *Hamilton is My Lady* featured stage-design backdrops, backup dancers and singers, including a sing-a-long tune of the same name with a backing beat and a choreographed dance number. The whole production, like many of her performances and interventions, transcended the narrow conventions of contemporary art, aligning more with a category of Boult's singular creativity.

Cuts from *Hamilton is My Lady* documentation spliced with archival Hamilton tourism video and clips of Kiki frolicking through her hometown come together in a mockumentary video installation included in Boult's debut solo exhibition at Centre[3] For Artistic + Social Practice in Hamilton during the spring of 2024. It was surprising to learn that after a decade of steady activity in her practice, she was only now having a solo exhibition. It is another testament to Boult's ability to circumnavigate established art world conventions and find possibilities elsewhere. The exhibition is also titled "Hamilton is My Lady," which comes from a line borrowed from comedian and fellow Hamiltonian Martin Short's 2012 comedy/musical special, *I, Martin Short, Goes Home*. The autobiographical mockumentary is the centrepiece of the artist's crafted environment that gives the audience a primer on Kiki's world. The gallery walls are, of course, pink, with custom velvety pink seating and life-size freestanding cardboard cuts of Kiki posing for us. A glowing sculptural piece in the form of a building archway reads "Kiki's My Lady." The design mimics the baroque architectural detail seen in the railing of the deserted mall Kiki shows us in the video as she galavants through her city. She poses and gestures in her best pink realtor power suit, giving us a tour. She inhales with pleasure, wryly taking in the kitschy grandeur of the mall, a local treasure clearly past its prime. There are parallels between Kiki and Hamilton; both are eager for validation. They try a bit too hard, and the failure to attain their ambitions earns them the common term of endearment: camp. Kiki most certainly loves her hometown more than it probably does in return. It's little wonder that Kiki expresses this love by constantly poking fun and dishing it out to her. Whereas Lady Hamilton is often lost in her own reflection but doesn't seem to be that self-aware, we have Kiki to remind her to snap out of it, despite the fact that Kiki has her own issues to deal with.

Luther Konadu *is an artist based in Winnipeg, MB.*

Kiera Boult, *Hamilton's My Lady*, 2024. Installation photo. Photograph by Amy Su. Image courtesy of Centre[3].
Pgs 22-23: Kiera Boult, *Hamilton's My Lady*, 2024. Film still. Image courtesy of the artist.

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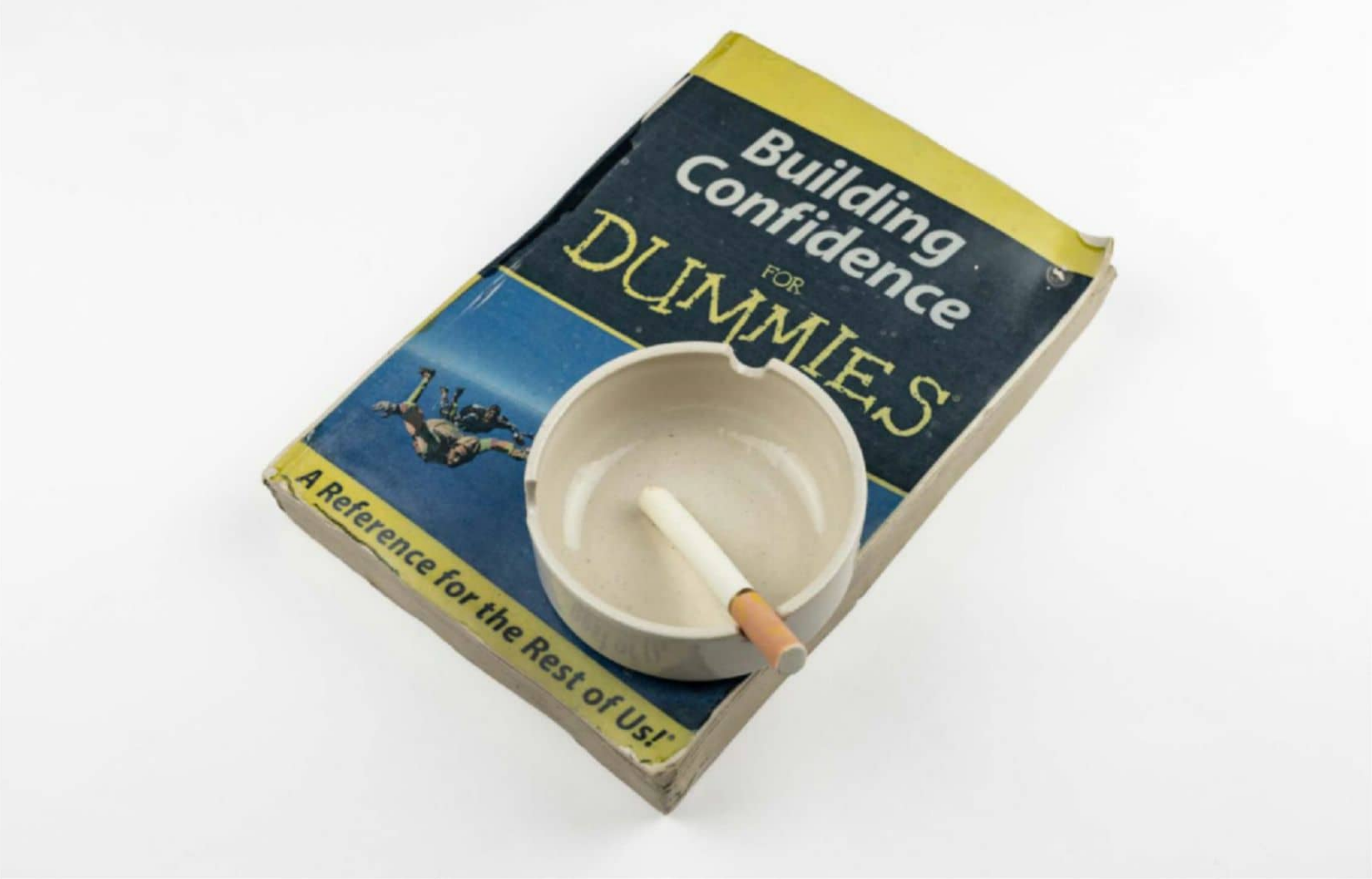
DEADPAN DRAMA:

Erica Eyres' Art of Surreal Subjectivity

By Gabrielle Willms



Erica Eyres, *Building Confidence for Dummies*, 2023. Glazed stoneware. Image courtesy of the artist.

In *Learn to Dance*, artist Erica Eyres' latest satirical video work, four female characters embark on a deeply unsettling eighteen-minute journey to self-empowerment through dance. Against a tacky geometric backdrop reminiscent of low-budget 80s TV sets, the mock-serious instructor Nicole begins by asking her participants what brought them to the class. Jenny confides that lately, she's "constantly worried that other people are judging me," and knows that self-confidence is essential to "get ahead in life." Angela admits, with a halting chuckle, that "most days, I feel like I'm a hole in the ground." The fourth character, Nicole's ambiguous "colleague" Claire, simply stands off to the side, staring into the middle distance and offering something between a smile and a grimace from time to time. Playing all four roles in wigs and ill-advised 80s outfits, Eyres' preternatural instincts for the cringe-worthy and absurd are on full display.

As she narrates her personal story of overcoming anxiety and self-alienation, Nicole encourages her students to follow suit and find self-confidence via the liberatory potential of dance—specifically, as it turns out, badly performed, painfully slow, pseudo-sexual dance moves. But first, they must progress through the "mirror phase," if they're ever going to bring their "symbolic dance into real life," a loose riff on Jacque Lacan's "mirror stage" as the foundational moment of rift between self and other. Speaking with what Eyres has called the "estranged voice," based on German playwright Bertolt Brecht's "distancing effect,"[1] Nicole brings a surprisingly detached flavour to her radical project of self-actualization.

Taking up quotes from *Lacan for Beginners*, Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*, and a found VHS tape called *Learn to Lapdance*,[2] *Learn to Dance* blends the jargon of self-help, psychoanalysis, and female pathos to increasingly surreal and bizarre effect. Eager to please their passive-aggressive instructor, the students sway and touch themselves self-consciously in silence, occasionally breaking the fourth wall with a faltering smile.

The result is both hilarious and excruciating. Eyres manages to skewer vapid tropes of self-optimization culture in ways that feel both nostalgic and eerily current, while slowly bringing us to the edge of an almost existential unease. The video revels in its playful surrealism, even as it dredges up discomfiting questions about gender, sexuality and the artifice of social performance simmering just below the surface.

This, it seems, is classic Erica Eyres—leaving us both helplessly amused and unsettled in some ineffable way, simultaneously drawn in and alienated. In Eyres' world, the tragicomic reigns, and something is always thrillingly off.

Eyres is an interdisciplinary artist working in drawing, painting, ceramics, sculpture, installation and video. Based in Glasgow since 2004, she was born and raised in Winnipeg, and her work often takes up forgotten cultural memorabilia from her upbringing in the 80s and 90s. Employing deadpan humour and self-consciously amateur aesthetics, she uses this nostalgic imagery to probe and unsettle social constructions related to femininity, heterosexuality, and class.

Eyres credits Winnipeg as a major influence on her off-kilter aesthetics, citing the mix of casual and surrealist sensibilities and "strange characters" that make up the city's enigmatic personality.[3] At the well-attended opening of "Dancing for Dummies," a solo exhibition of Eyres' work at the Centre for Cultural and Artistic Practices in the city last winter (her first in many years), it was clear that the relationship is reciprocal. There was a strong sense of welcoming home a beloved paragon of Winnipeg weirdness. Attendees seemed generally delighted by her work's irreverent use of the standard white-walled space. Someone told me they had a great chat with the artist's mom, and I found out shortly after that my borrowed pottery wheel originally belonged to Eyres. For an artist who left twenty years ago, the mutual indebtedness and ongoing rapport between Eyres and the city felt striking, but maybe not surprising. She still returns to Winnipeg frequently, and as anyone who lives here likes to remind you, it never really changes. In this way, despite her work's self-conscious nostalgia, she captures something timeless about the self-deprecation and gritty eccentricity of this place.

Personal narrative may haunt Eyres' work then, but she never allows us to settle into any neat autobiographical interpretation. Though she makes use of experiences from her own life or people she's known, her gifts for narrative slipperiness and ironic distance render this relationship dynamic rather than static. A video or painting might allude to some kernel of lived experience, but its fictionalized melodrama ultimately serves more to challenge than appease our interpretive gaze. By playing with the gaps in what an audience can know of an artist, and the biased distortions of memory, she slyly problematizes any notion of subjective truth. In fact, she seems to relish letting us grasp for meaning until we eventually implicate ourselves in the process, drawing on our own affective associations and emotional entanglements.

Or, perhaps, it's less a challenge and more an invitation to partake in her intuitive approach, where narrative is constructed and contested after the fact. Eyres' work typically starts with some kind of cultural reference or object—porn magazines, beauty manuals, VHS videos, or embarrassing

Erica Eyres, *Learn to Dance*, 2023. HD video still. Image courtesy of the artist.

vintage touchstones like the *For Dummies* book series—but the specific content of the images is often less important than their sensibility. She seeks imagery with an "emotional pull" for her that sparks some sense of identification. As she put it recently, "I'm looking for awkwardness."[4]

Choosing these images instinctively, Eyres then pries them away from the reference material through iterative editorial processes of scanning, cropping, and resizing to create a particular affect.[5] If it's a video, she starts with something she wants to mimic, maybe a style of speech, and lets the idea evolve organically, before filming repetitively until she's satisfied.[6] But it's only when the work is finished that its meaning really starts to seep out and reveal itself. At this point, she might lean into or rebuff possible narrative resonances between various pieces. But "quite often," she admits, a work "reveals something personal that I didn't intend to."[7] This vulnerable moment of interpretive surprise or even failure becomes mutually shared by artist and viewer. Caught up in the work's almost-cathartic awkwardness, we're all left wondering about our own unreliable subjectivity and what repressed parts of the self might accidentally be spilling over in public.

If Eyres taps into some kind of universal experience of an incoherent, estranged self, she also seems to be preoccupied with the subjectivity of a particular kind of hapless, tortured, straight white woman. Women feature predominantly in Eyres' portraits and video work, and many of her ceramics take up archetypical artifacts from a middle-class female adolescence. In her painted portraits from vintage porn magazines, the models stare back with an inscrutable mix of knowingness and naivete. Hints of boredom, doubt, or bemusement play on their faces, and they consistently fail to convince us of their status as objects of desire ripe for male consumption. Even their nudity is carnivalesque, veering more toward ridiculous than erotic. The portraits of "before" images taken from beauty manuals similarly capture an irrepressible weirdness that you know could never be eradicated by a better haircut.

In these pieces, the male gaze feels curiously absent, abstracted and unevenly internalized rather than a "real" force of subjection. Instead, we sense that the psychosexual dynamic is between the woman and herself, and here we are, interrupting a disarmingly brave yet underwhelming performance of sexual self-assurance for the void. In this way, Eyres confronts us with the artifice of heterosexuality and derails any assumed vectors of desire. We can't help but think of John Berger's observation that "women watch themselves being looked at…the surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed is female. Thus she turns herself into an object of vision: a sight."[8]

Part of what makes this internal drama so compelling is Eyres' focus on the banal and everyday. The women in these pieces are amateurs, striving and failing to perform their prescribed social roles and inadvertently revealing the absurd construction of these categories. Yet, even if they occupy some kind of cultural backwater and no one's really watching, they're clearly on a rich subjective journey that cannot be dismissed. Such women don't usually generate such fervent curiosity, but Eyres is attuned to something like the pseudo-sacred, or at least delightfully strange, in the feminine profane.

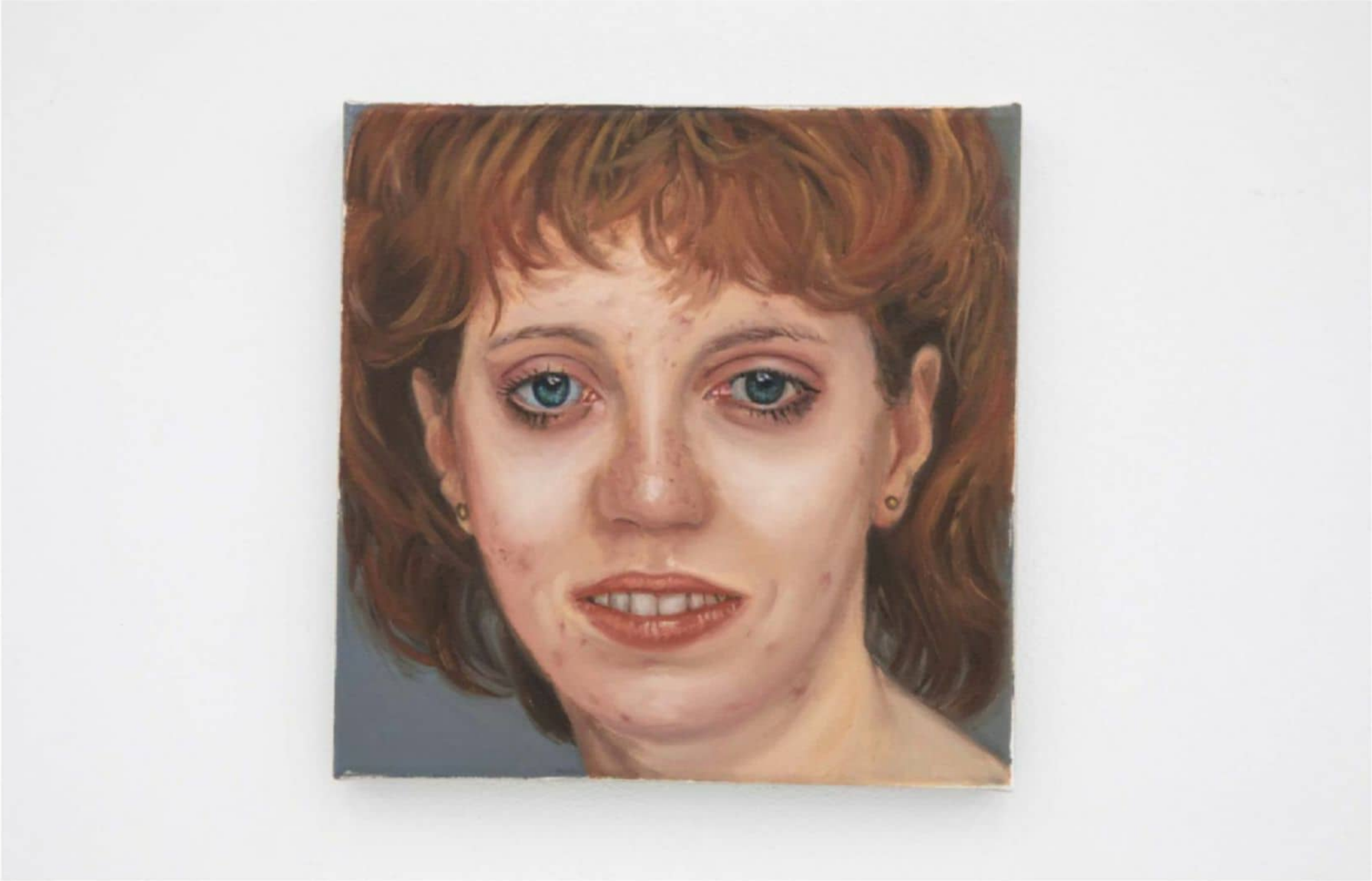
Erica Eyres, *Anne 2.0*, 2016. HD video still. Image courtesy of the artist.

Although women's damaged psyches may be an easy target, Eyres doesn't default to cruelty in her satire. She also seems disinterested in any simplistic feminist commentary or redemption arc. Instead, she confronts us with the irreducible fact of full-blown subjectivity, as warped as it might be by, say, patriarchy and capitalism, and encourages us to enjoy the implosion of social expectations these failed performers and models accidentally offer.

Maybe that's easier to do with cultural leftovers from a few decades ago which benefit from the gloss of nostalgia, but Eyres' work also resonates obliquely with the contemporary moment. Exploring the cultural manifestations of a neoliberal turn to individualism and self-help in the 80s and 90s, she attunes us to the psychological coping mechanisms and delusional aspirations that continue to sustain us in truly late capitalism. Through the campy aesthetics of Nicole and her aspiring class, performance art robot Anne 2.0's hilariously dead-eyed but breathless monologue about shopping at Costco with your mom before closing,[9] or Eyres' eerily realistic ceramic representations of the *For Dummies* series—shorthand for a quintessential 90s optimism that we can tackle any problem, no matter how complex, on our own—the message is almost easier to receive. Meanwhile, self-destruction, the seedy underbelly of misguided self-improvement, is never far away. Eyres' glossy ceramics of half-smoked cigarettes dangling from ashtrays, and fast food and sodas seen in exhibitions like "Family Meal" (2022) invite us to consider the ways the two are inextricably linked, our disordered cravings playing out erratically in the domestic and public spheres.

If the thwarted desires Eyres so capably portrays fall into a dynamic of what Lauren Berlant calls cruel optimism,[10] the artist finds ways to mine the affective possibilities of this relationship rather than dwelling on its deadends. Her virtuoso ceramics are at once lifeless caricatures of the debris of our impulsive, cheap consumption, as well as objects of high art, playfully redeemed through perfect rendering. Her video works are often devastating sendups of our most familiar, denigrated genres—reality TV, sitcoms, infomercials—made to feel haunting and unreal, undermining our sense of control. Consistently, she lets us swing back and forth between recognition and alienation without landing somewhere definitive. While we're wincing at performance art robot Anne 2.0 waiting blank-faced until her next performance request, or willing Angela to find her way out of the "mirror phase," we're also kind of laughing (painfully) at ourselves. If you're doing it right, Nicole reminds us, "the difference between yourself and others is put radically into question."

It's hard not to appreciate this dedicated attention to the discarded, bizarre, lightly pathetic cultural flotsam that's been relegated to the corners of our psyches or our parents' basements. Eyres shows us there's much here to mine, keeping us alert to the mysterious processes of social production and the weird, never-ending dance of constructing the self.



Erica Eyres, *Eva (Before Painting)*, 2023. Oil on linen, 30 x 30 cm. Image courtesy of the artist.

Gabrielle Willms *is a writer currently based in Treaty 1 territory/Winnipeg.*

Notes

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2. Erica Eyres, "Info for BlackFlash Profile," email response to Gabrielle Willms, October 25, 2024.
3. Paul Carey-Kent, "Erica Eyres: Uncanny Deconstructions," *Border Crossings*, May 2015, https://bordercrossingsmag.com/article/erica-eyress-uncanny-deconstructions.
4. Rubén Palma, "Erica Eyres on Her Art, Nostalgia, Life, Creative Process and More," *Overstandard*, May 15, 2024, https://overstandard.dk/erica-eyres-on-her-art-nostalgia-life-creative-process-and-more/
5. Palma, "Erica Eyres."
6. Eyres, "Info for BlackFlash Profile," October 25, 2024.
7. Palma,"Erica Eyres."
8. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (New York: Penguin Books, 1972), 47.
9. *Anne 2.0* (2018) is a video that promotes the new and improved performance art robot Anne 2.0, designed to deliver live performance art from the comfort of your home. When you're done with Anne, whose expressionless delivery of soul-crushing content about banal suburban consumerism made me laugh out loud, you can hide her in a closet or give her her own bedroom where she will stare blankly at the ceiling.
10. Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011),1-14. According to Berlant, "a relation of cruel optimism exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing." And yet, optimism is a site of "negotiated sustenance that makes life bearable."

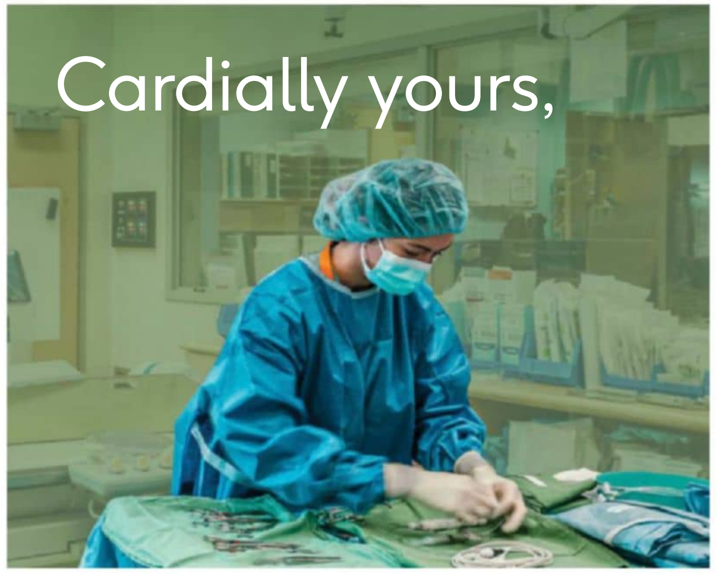
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Image: Jon Sasaki, *Microbes Swabbed from a Palette Used by F.H. Varley* (detail), 2020. Image courtesy of the artist and Clint Roenisch Gallery.

Judah Iyunade, *3 Chiefs*, 2020. Photography series. Image courtesy of the artist.

OUR GOSSIP IS TOP NOTCH:

An Interview with Judah Iyunade

By Clint Enns

The title of this interview is a line of dialogue from Judah Iyunade's video *How to Interpret the Masquerade* (2024). This work was one component of a solo show titled "Alara" at the Centre for Cultural and Artistic Practices (C'cap) in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 2024.[1] I encountered this line in a slightly different iteration, as a photograph that I assumed was borrowing from the aesthetics of a split-screen video. The photograph consisted of two images, side-by-side, both featuring the artist wearing different costumes. In the left-hand image, the man is wearing a suit with a matching hat. He cups his hand in order to whisper something toward the image on the right. In the right-hand image, the artist is wearing a more traditional outfit, a white shirt with a patterned, gold vest and an embroidered fila gọbi. He is holding a phone to his ear, leaning in close to listen to what is being spoken by the man on the left. Both images feature fabric backgrounds. Across the bottom of the photograph—holding both images together—is a text (in the form of a subtitle) reading: "Our gossip is top notch."

This photograph was featured as part of a members' show at aceartinc. and, upon viewing, it immediately took hold of my imagination, given my love of both petty gossip and Nollywood cinema. Have I been peddling low-grade, mediocre blather? Who are these guys with "top notch" gossip, and what secrets do they share? This image is the artistic equivalent of a friend telling you they know a secret—a *really* good one—but that they can't possibly reveal it to you.

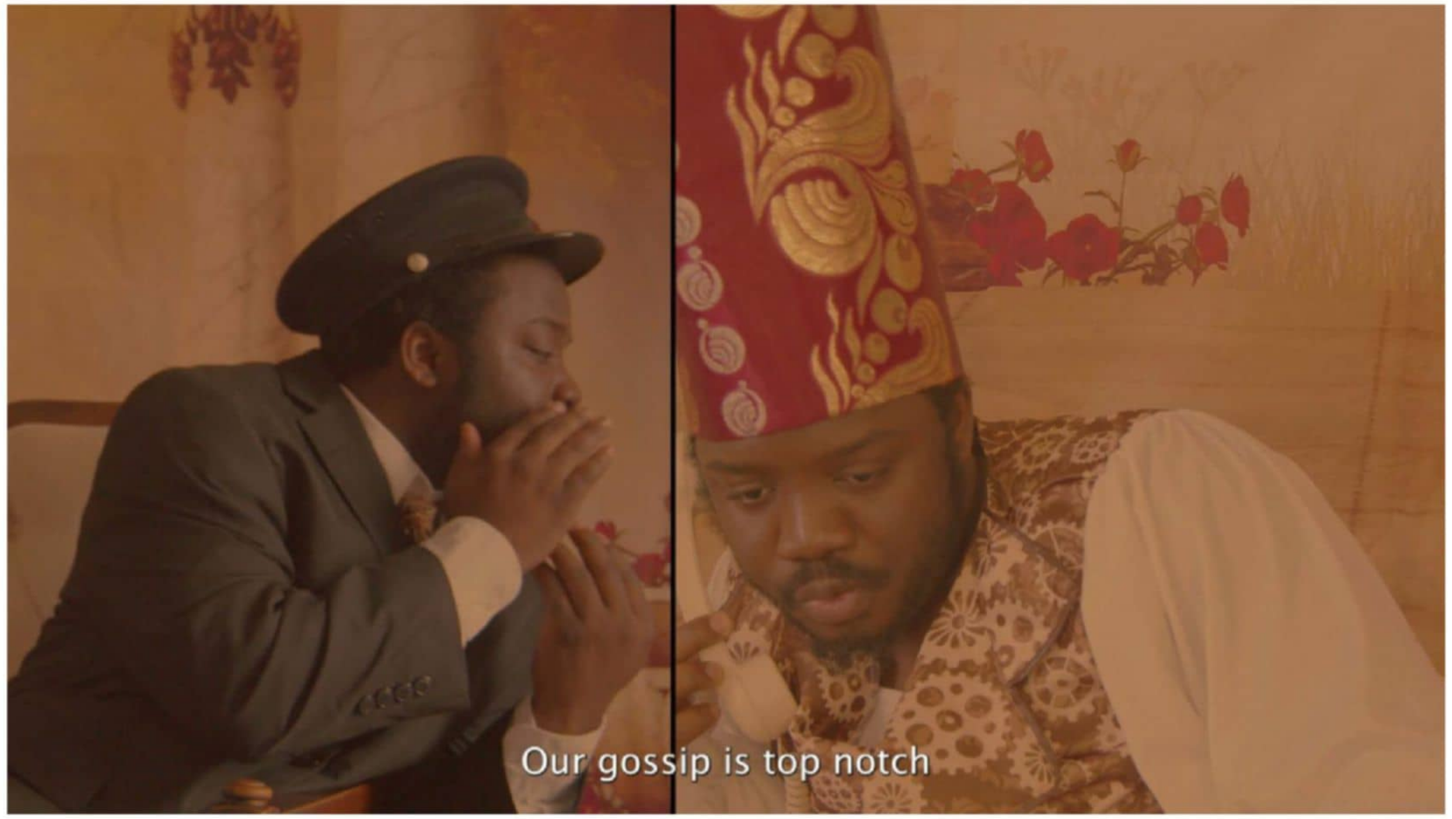
At the time, I believed this was a stand-alone piece, as it was shown without context. The photograph was at once enigmatic, poetic, humorous, and confounding. I wanted more information, but photographic context is rarely self-contained within the frame. I came across the image once more in the aforementioned video, where it appears as split-screen footage, woven together with several narratives: the artist performing as a Gẹlẹdẹ masquerade performer, an actual Gẹlẹdẹ ceremony, a video made by the Manchester Museum with a Yoruba knowledge keeper providing cultural insights on the ceremonial purpose of the Gẹlẹdẹ masks presumably in the Museum's collection. The voice-over reveals that the Gẹlẹdẹ functioned as a form of record, noting which families are entitled to chieftaincy titles. "So the Gẹlẹdẹ is a kind of gossiper," someone asks, to which the knowledge keeper slyly responds in the affirmative, with the now well-rehearsed line: "Our gossip is top notch."

The artist behind the photograph is Judah Iyunade, a Winnipeg-based, Nigerian-born photographer and filmmaker. His cinematic work blends experimental narration and lyrical visuals in order to invite the viewer to think through challenging ideas about representation, camaraderie, colonization, and living between cultures. The works are meditative and poetic, engaging with a history of independent filmmaking and photography practices in both Nigeria and the Prairies. His most recent work, *Celia*, is an experimental feature that is being produced with the support of the Black Film Collective (BFC).

The following interview was conducted over Zoom and collaboratively edited into its current form.

Clint Enns (CE): How did you decide on the costumes and backgrounds in *How to Interpret the Masquerade* and in your photography in general?

Judah Iyunade (JI): I use backdrops and costumes inspired by West African photography produced in the postcolonial period. Currently, I am researching the motives for these backdrops and believe that beyond being simply an emanation of both the photographer and the subjects, they were also aspirational. For instance, consider Philip Kwame Apagya's photograph *When Will My Children Come?* (1996-2003), where a mother and her three children stand in front of a backdrop of an open fridge filled with beer and food,


Our gossip is top notch

a television set (complete with remote control), JVC stereo equipment with a large speaker, VCR, and VHS tapes.

For *How to Interpret the Masquerade*, I used backdrops with pillars that look like they were from a Renaissance painting. I wanted to contrast the backdrop with the costumes of the men gossiping.

CE: Who are these men with the gossip?

JI: These men are me, but I am playing two different characters: my grandfathers. One of my grandfathers was a priest, and the other was a performer. It can be read as a self-portrait, but the idea came from a dream I had about my grandfathers talking to each other. The costumes were inspired both by photographs and memories of them.

CE: What are they gossiping about?

JI: In the video, a voice-over refers to the Gẹlẹdẹ as a kind of gossiper who is peddling hereditary hierarchies. In my dream, the conversation was fragmented and distorted.

CE: Both the video and your photography in "Alara" seem to be an extension of West African studio portraiture. I can see elements of photographer Seydou Keïta, who was famous for his innovative use of props and backdrops, in your work. In contrast to your photographs, he worked exclusively in black-and-white and famously stopped taking photographs when colour became popular. Your art embraces colour and moves between different times. Who are some of your artistic influences from this tradition? Who are some of your cinematic influences?

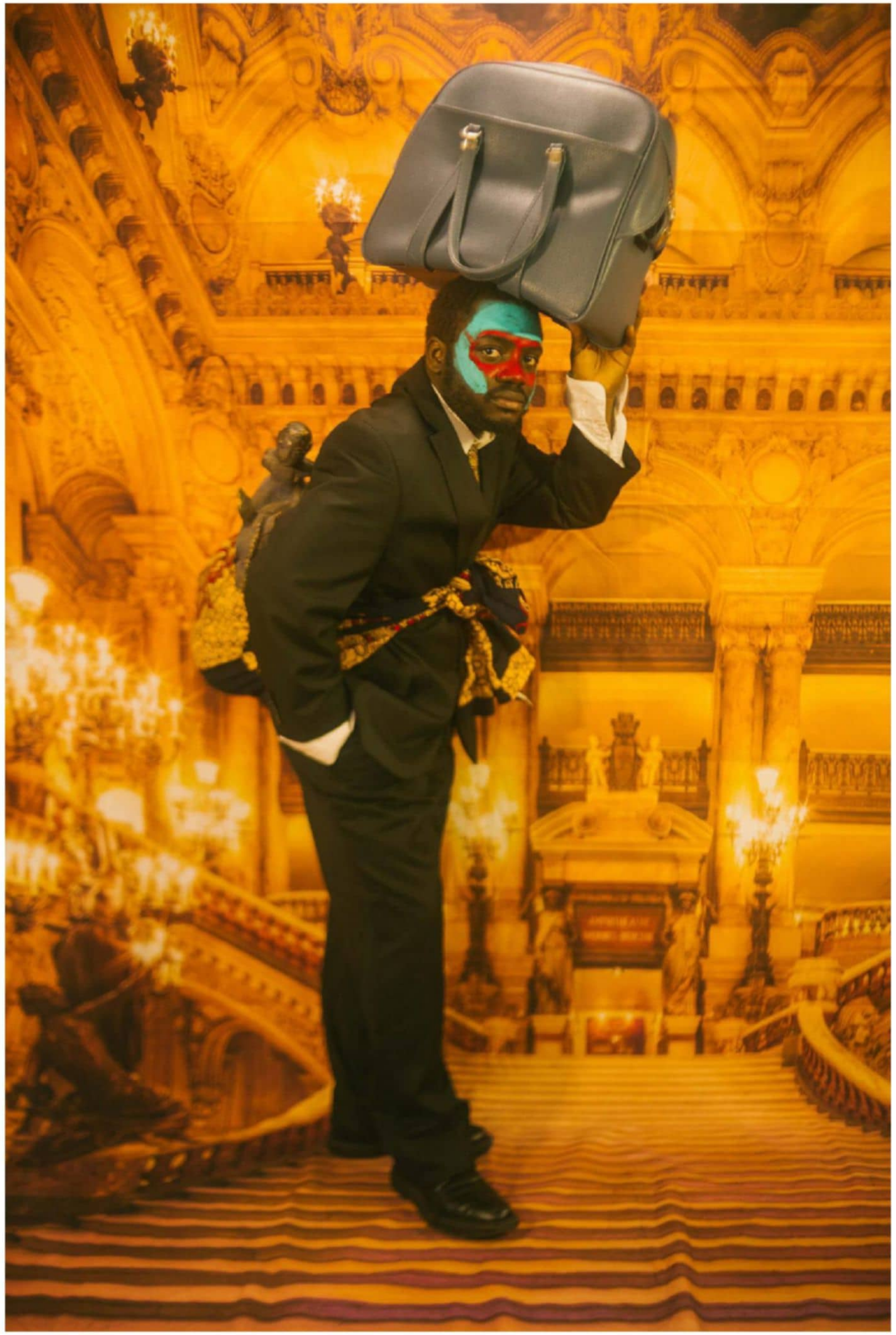
JI: In terms of West African photography, I am influenced by the work of Philip Kwame Apagya, Samuel Fosso, Malick Sidibé, Sanlé Sory, and of course, Seydou Keïta. In terms of cinema, I will watch anything, but I am specifically excited by slow and transcendental cinema. I love Béla Tarr and Paul Schrader, both of whom understand cinema's meditative power. For me, if inspired, films can be a form of church, a spiritual experience.

I am not particularly interested in dialogue and feel that the other components of cinema are what provide actual depth. For example, think about an emotion like grief. A dialogue about grief does not allow for the viewer to experience it; however, it is possible to convey this emotion through other aspects of the medium.

I often blend prairie and West African aesthetics. I am very excited by Prairie filmmakers like Guy Maddin, Rhayne Vermette, Heidi Phillips, and Aaron Zeghers. Heidi is a very spiritual filmmaker, and I feel our works have affinities, plus we worked together at Video Pool Media Arts Centre.

CE: "Our Gossip is Top Notch" could have been a still from a Nollywood video. Do you see your work in conversation with Nollywood cinema?

JI: Honestly, I don't know. There is a difference between independent Nigerian cinema and the Nollywood tradition, and I am more interested in the former. I think the acting is great in Nollywood films, but in general, the scripts are poor. I am more excited by filmmakers like Tunde Kelani who I grew up watching and who I got to meet since he was good friends with my mom's boss. He is a Nigerian director who has made



Pg 32: Judah Iyunade, *How to Interpret the Masquerade*, 2024. Film still. Image courtesy of the artist.
Above: Judah Iyunade, *Alara*, 2024. Photography series. Image courtesy of the artist.

19843342

I am Minnesota, on fire, burning

Judah Iyunade, *Transcension*, 2021. Film still. Image courtesy of the artist.

films since the 1980s and works outside the Nollywood tradition. He even worked on Adeyemi Afolayan's classic *Taxi Driver 2* (1987). He is still making films.

CE: In your film, *Transcension* (2021), the poem by Ruby Chijioke-Nwauche begins by cleverly paraphrasing a line by American poet Mark Strand: "In a field / I am the absence of field. / I am always what is missing."[2] She turns the poem upside-down by applying this form of absence to white spaces that render people of colour invisible or without a voice. Do you see Winnipeg's art scene like this?

JI: Yes. At this very moment, we are at a fairly stable time; however, everything is fragile and real change is slow. For instance, although aceartinc. itself is in a better place, artists of colour are still facing the consequences of speaking out over the controversy a few years back. Winnipeg is a small scene. In a racist city, art spaces should be safe havens, and they still aren't.

On the other side of things, I wouldn't have been able to make my most recent film if the Black Film Collective didn't exist. Ninety percent of the cast and crew is from the BFC. It's not about the funding; it's about actual support and care. Each of us contributed to the project, including props, rentals, and gas money. Everyone made sacrifices and everyone was excited to be part of it. It is an experiment in collective filmmaking.

CE: The poem makes effective use of the personal "I" and the universal "we." We can feel the pain and anger she feels from both past and present colonial injustices, and how this impacts the way she is perceived, but we can also recognize her resilience in the face of generational trauma. At the same time, the audience is confronted by a form of colonial "calling out," as being the one who erases languages, pillages art, and corrupts tribes ("I am the languages you erased. / The art you stole."). The film is both affective and effective since the viewer is simultaneously empathetic and under scrutiny. Of course, the "you" being addressed are the systematic structures themselves, while the "I" is a stand-in for the voices of resistance. This is revealed at the end ("I am thousands of slaves risking their lives for freedom / I am Ferguson / I am Selma / I am Minnesota, on fire, burning") as the text invites the audience to embody multiple, sometimes contradictory subjectivities at once. In the film, you showcase your photography aesthetics using Winnipeg apartment buildings as the backdrop, instead of fabric. What role do you see Winnipeg playing in this work?

JI: Winnipeg is one of the best examples of Canadian colonialism in practice. Simply look at the amount of Indigenous people living on the streets or the Indigenous women who turn up in the Red River. The film was shot against this backdrop.

Ruby made the poem. That is, the poem was a response to the images in the film. Colonialism is a global problem; whether you are in Nigeria or Winnipeg, there are residues in both places. This film was made during the lockdown. It was depressing to be stuck in Winnipeg, despite my weird attachment to the city. I wouldn't have pursued being an artist if I wasn't living in Winnipeg.

CE: Can you talk about the four-act structure (Act I: Identity, Act II: Colonial Obsessions, Act III: Sunset, Act IV: Final Form) of *Transcension*, where we begin with the sky and end at the water? While Chijioke-Nwauche's poem suggests revolutionary transcendence, your images seem to suggest spiritual transcendence starting with a horrific image of a man seemingly stuck in a chair in the middle of an apartment hallway and ending with a man cleansing himself in Lake Winnipeg. What do you see as being transcended?

JI: I associated the ending, a person walking into the water, as a form of sanctuary and freedom. Is it possible for the Red River to be the Blue Sea?

I think of the natural settings as a form of anti-backdrop or anti-set. *Celia* is explicitly exploring the contrast between set and anti-set, but you can see some of that in this film as well.

CE: *Ori Mi Agbe (My Head)* (2021) takes place in a dream space, somewhere between a depressing reality and a sleep state. It is slightly subversive—it is not a dream from another place, but another place or frame of mind brought to Winnipeg.

JI: The film was shot during the pandemic. It is a nightmare where a creature takes us into another realm. "Ori" is the Yoruba word used to describe a vessel that processes conscious thought. The rhythmic and repetitive sound is unedited, a prayer in Yoruba.

In your head, there is a spirit that can work for or against you. The prayer in the film is meant to ensure the spirit doesn't work against you. You must appease the spirit in your head to make sure it is working for you. Although you can't go against your fortune since it is preordained, you can get the spirit in your head to work with you.

CE: The film presents a gap in understanding between Western viewers and Nigerian frames in terms of cultural references and language; however, it also has affinities with experimental cinema, in particular, with the trance film. Was it a deliberate gesture not to subtitle the work? Do you see it as a trance film or in that tradition?

JI: There is just too much nuance to subtitle the prayer. Subtitles would do a disservice since the sound is meant to induce a spiritual state. You are correct, the film is intended to produce a trance-like state in the viewer. I think it is possible for people to connect to the film without necessarily understanding the words of the poem.

CE: I like your use of filmic emulation in your work, mimicking Super 8 and 16mm. Do you shoot Super 8? Is the emulation just to keep some aesthetic consistency, or do you see it as playing another role?

JI: WNDX festival has been very influential to my practice, and this year I made a Super 8 film called *Staring into darkness* for the One Take Super 8 Event. In general, I like film aesthetics, and my work feels flat or incomplete without it. But I can't afford to shoot on film; it is just too expensive. Most people can't tell the difference between emulated emulsion and real emulsion, if it is done well. Plus, it places the work in a different tradition.

CE: I was wondering why the Black Diaspora Cinema Archive[3] has no films made in Canada, in particular, the films of Winnipeg filmmaker Winston Moxam. What are your criteria for inclusion?

JI: Winston isn't on the list since his films aren't available online. I should probably add Bisong Taiwo since he is an active Winnipeg filmmaker who is worth checking out. The list points out that there is Nigerian cinema beyond Nollywood. Nigeria has its own arthouse, and there was cinema being produced in Nigeria long before Nollywood existed. Ultimately, I made this list as a teaching/learning device. You learn to be a better filmmaker by watching films.

Clint Enns *is an artist, curator, and writer based in Tiohtià:ke / Montréal.*

Judah Iyunade *is a Nigerian-born, lens-based artist living in Winnipeg. Drawing on his Nigerian heritage, his photographs and films explore history, identity, and emotions as ways of centering the African diasporic experience. His unique style incorporates elements of West African studio photography in order to capture moments of vulnerability and intimacy.*

Notes

1. Luther Konadu, "Alara: A Solo Exhibition by Judah Iyunade," Centre for Cultural and Artistic Practices, https://www.c-cap.org/alara.
   "*Alara*" in Yoruba is a word that translates to "the performer" or, in some other understandings, "a magician," someone capable of summoning presences other than their own. In some translations, the word "ara" can mean "family" in Yoruba and is also the suffix of "*Alara,*" giving it another meaning: the performer of family, that is, one who represents the family, or the head of a family.
2. Mark Strand, "Keeping Things Whole," *Selected Poems* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 10.
3. The Black Diaspora Cinema Archive is a collection of films compiled by Judah Iyunade. The informal archive contains links to over three hundred films and features a wide range of work, from canonical films made as part of L.A. Rebellion to contemporary arthouse music videos. The works are labelled as: Feature Film, Documentary, and Revolutionary/Liberation. The archive can be accessed here: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1caU0WE6162CzoGQar6jk4vOhOiko_WukG7uq32nito8/edit?gid=0#gid=0

Venice House
STEAKS
PIZZA
PASTA
FAMILY RESTAURANT
LICENSED DINING ROOM
Venice House
HOURS

Pg 36: Entrance to The Venice House on Central Ave. in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Image courtesy of the author.

BE CAREFUL, THE TOP PLATE IS VERY HOT OR THE DEATH AND LIFE OF LICENSED FAMILY RESTAURANTS

By Cole Thompson

Is food poisoning the purest form of affect? Lying awkwardly on the cold tile floor of the bathroom, bleach-stained towels folded into makeshift pillows, my body becomes an experiment in feeling without thought. Oftentimes, thinking only makes matters worse. While I could recollect the full inventory of items ingested over the past forty-eight hours, conjuring their images, tastes, scents, and textures is liable to send me into a perspiring effort, felt squarely in the diaphragm, to keep things down. Why go through the long list of potential causes when one always intuitively knows? Logically, the culprit could have been almost anything, but somehow the body has a way of identifying its assailant amongst a flurry of possibilities. Accompanied by Canada Dry and a sleeve of stale soda crackers, I endure the undulating waves of bacterial intensity that resist all forms of clarified articulation.

In these moments of intensity, the subject starts to fade away or become superimposed with an altogether different form of being. The self lapses into something purely visceral, consisting only of immediacy and response to stimuli. The stomach takes over, and we wade in a pool of feeling whose experience has not yet been altered by the rigid structures of cognition and words. In Brian Massumi's seminal essay "The Autonomy of Affect," the philosopher constructs an argument for the unassimilable nature of affect, which he uses synonymously with *intensity*. He distinguishes affect from emotions, which are "subjective content, the socio-linguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal."[1] Whereas emotions are "qualified intensities," affect is a distinctly unqualified experience of an event that "is not ownable or recognizable, and is thus resistant to critique."[2] Affect still accounts for social conditions and contexts, but it organizes them differently than subjective articulations of emotion which unfold in the microseconds after the onset of affective intensity.[3] Affectual experience is precognitive, not so different from what we might call a gut feeling. Whether moved by affect or food poisoning, there is always the potential for externalization, but in the preceding moments we feel the situation playing out in registers incompatible with the subject's desire for clarity.

In many ways, Massumi's argument can be distilled as such: affect is not ownable. We experience it on a short-term lease, only so long as we can resist describing it through our own subject position. Once articulated—once owned—it dispels its potential and transforms into something legible. In Wong Kar Wai's *Chungking Express* (1994), we see the deferral of ownership in order to sustain these muddy affective registers, if only for a brief point in time. A film in two parts, its A-side details the romantic toils of Hong Kong police officer He Zhi Wu as he laments a recent breakup with his girlfriend, May. Hanging around the Midnight Express food stand, the officer dials up old flames on the restaurant's payphone in acts of heartbroken desperation. Finding no solace in these failed attempts at reconciliation, he makes a disciplinary vow: for each day in the month of April, he purchases a can of pineapple—May's favourite food—with a sell-by date of May 1st. When May (the month) finally arrives, having had no contact from May (his ex-lover), the officer eats all thirty cans of pineapple in a marathon sitting, symbolically consuming his expired love in an effort to bring closure to his past relationship. Of course, the pineapples do not stay down for long. He purges himself of love—of May—slumped under fluorescent lights in the bathroom of his Hong Kong apartment. The stomach decides his fate, like the petals of a daisy.

Despite the officer's systematic approach to the acceptance of lost love, the means are anything but rational. He gives himself to an experience predicated upon the removal of ownership, allowing the expired pineapples to concoct an intensity that impresses itself upon him. Although it is quite clear from early on that May has no desire to rekindle their romance, the officer suspends the inevitable, removing his agency from the equation as sugar and acid converge in a rigged coin toss of hope. I, too, have attempted to give myself to irrational processes in hopes of mitigating nerve-racking or uncomfortable situations. In my undergraduate days, I would stay up late on nights before final exams playing games of solitaire on my coffee table, convincing myself that winning three games in a row would lead to favourable results the next morning. You might be surprised to find that there was very little correlation between solitaire success and exam grades. For one reason or another, I always wore a pair of blue socks with images of sailboats on them anytime I was on an airplane. Eventually, they ran so ragged that I was forced to tempt fate with a new pair. Despite the mutual exclusivity of events, creating an absurd connection allowed me to remove a form of subjective agency from the proceedings. While I could have been studying, resting or packing, I instead chose to give in to an irrational process, opting for minor blips of unownable affective experience before rationality set in again.

Do these peculiar arrangements constitute acts of becoming-pineapple? Becoming-solitaire? Becoming-sock? Do they form alliances with other entities in hopes of derailing processes of subjectivization? Here, I clumsily lean on Deleuze and Guattari's concept of becoming-animal where, as a means of parting with the logic of humanism and its rational order, one neither imitates nor regresses nor identifies with a non-human animal, but creates a non-hierarchical alliance which allows for new affective measures on a plane of consistency between beings.[4] In this exchange, there is no subject, only becoming: "a verb with a consistency all its own."[5] He Zhi Wu does not try to imitate canned pineapple any more than canned pineapple might imitate him. He creates a block of affective exchange, ceding forms of his subjecthood in the process. It is perhaps in those moments when we resist rationalizing our gut feelings that we experience a related form of becoming, described by Deleuze and Guattari as the Body without Organs (BwO). The BwO is always in a state of becoming as it attempts to destratify the rational organization imposed on its being. However, destratifying—or dis*organ*izing —oneself is a dangerous pursuit that should be undertaken in small iterative steps by "[lodging ourselves] on a stratum, [and experimenting] with the opportunities it offers" before retreating to stable territory.[6] Said otherwise, we cannot live indefinitely under the rule of food poisoning, but while we are there, we can experiment with new modes of being before returning to better health.

Moments of affective experience that precede organized thought are one form of this experimentation. To live there would be untenable, but to stretch their duration is revelatory. This is the troubling task: to find zones of experimentation before our brains kick in and ruin all the fun. Can we delay our habitual inclination to articulate and instead stay with the gut feeling as long as possible, all the while knowing it won't last for long? We constantly organize responses to the scenes before us, but the trick is to stay with their intensities before making them legible, as if holding our breath underwater before coming up for air.[7] We should dabble with the BwO and allow ourselves to be impressed upon and formulated through intensities without speaking back to them or categorizing their forms. When walking through the front door of the Licensed Family Restaurant, abandon everything you know about dining establishments. Let waves of light, sound and fragrance hit you, but never attempt to identify their sources. Let the image stay fuzzy. We should consult with stomachs full of pineapple before anything passes back up past the vocal cords and normalcy resumes.

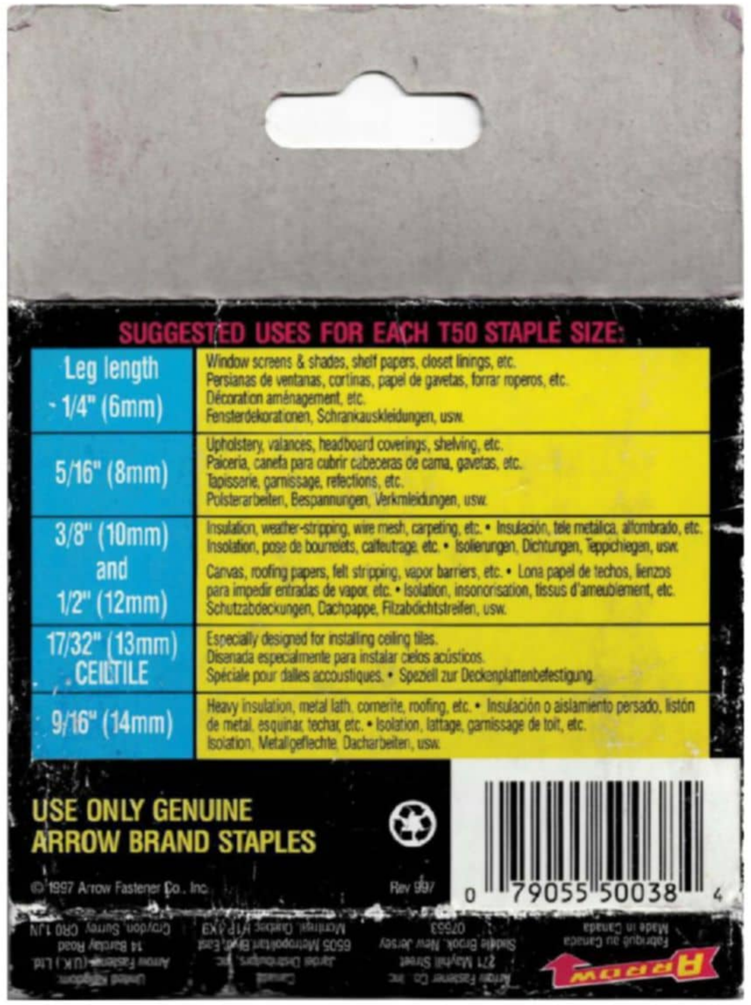
Writing is always a conflicted arena for encountering these ideas since it is difficult to escape the structures of signification that always point back to some semblance of an author-subject. Affective moments might spring forth in the gaps between words and their meanings, and one must be willing to tread in this inherent inefficiency. All those things that can't be clarified might add up to a poetic mode that allows us to dissolve subjecthood for flits here and there. I often return to poet and author Tan Lin's prose poetry, which often nullifies the subject in favour of a dissolved form of authorship:

> It would be nice to create works of literature that didn't have to be read but could be looked at, like placemats. The most exasperating thing at a poetry reading is always the sound of a poet reading.[8]

Or I think of critic and poet Laura Riding Jackson's earnest instructions on "How not to write literature:"

> Cultivate inattention, do not learn how to express yourself, make no distinctions between thoughts and emotions, since precocity comes of making one vie with the other, mistrust whatever seems superior and be partial to whatever seems inferior — whatever is not literature.[9]

These desires for non-articulated forms of literature might take shape in the microseconds that precede the output of literary structure. Or, perhaps, in the unauthored poetics of kitchen appliance owner manuals, washing instructions on a shirt tag, or the descriptive packaging of office supplies. They happen in the split-second between touching the hot plate and crying out in pain. These forms resist our penchant for organization, and the ability to think otherwise might hinge on our efforts to prolong them, if only for a fraction of a moment. Just long enough that speech might go back on its word before it is spoken.



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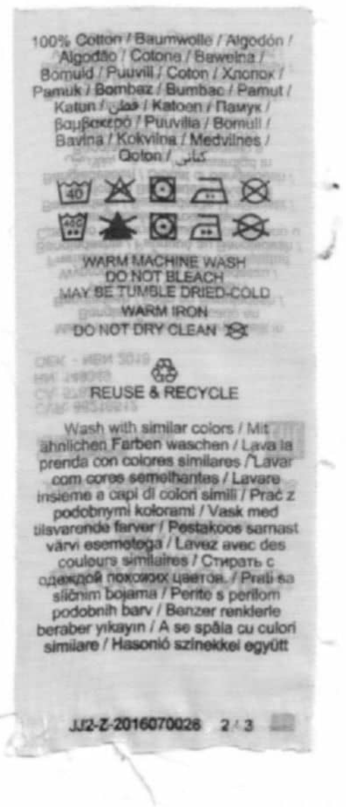

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Wash with similar colors / Mit ähnlichen Farben waschen / Lava la prenda con colores similares / Lavar com cores semelhantes / Lavare insieme a capi di colori simili / Prać z podobnymi kolorami / Vask med tilsvarende farver / Pestakoos sarnast värvi esemetega / Lavez avec des coulours similaires / Стирать с одеждой похожих цветов. / Prali sa sličnim bojama / Perite s perilom podobnih barv / Benzer renklerle beraber yıkayın / A se spăla cu culori similare / Hasonió szinekkel együtt

JJ2-Z-2016070026 2 / 3

Washing instructions from a Jack & Jones tee-shirt. Image courtesy of the author.

ARCH
IS NO
ENOUG

Fragment of book spine from Laura Riding Jackson’s Anarchism is Not Enough (1928). Image courtesy of the author.

As a genre, Licensed Family Restaurants (LFRs) are peculiarly underdeveloped, but to step through their doors is to know them immediately. Distinct from the all-ages fun boasted by the laminated menu barons that line the arteries of cities with boisterous facades made to be visible through vehicle windshields, LFRs ditch the scripted “hello, my name is [insert here] and I will be helping you today” with a welcoming “hi, just a sec” from the side of the mouth as one hand covers the telephone’s transmitter. The lights are dim with blinds half-drawn. There is a dining side and a lounge, but not so sealed off from one another that the clink of cutlery and the whirr of VLT machines don’t mix. The electric-pump water feature babbles in the entrance and the carpet flooring bears the compression of decades. A cool draft comes through each time a takeout order is picked up and there is always an open table for those who choose to stay. The soup of the day never changes and there is nutmeg in the meat sauce. The unevenly lit sign out front reads *The [insert here] House*. There is something for everyone.

When Jane Jacobs, in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1960), wrote that “new ideas must use old buildings,”[10] she pinpointed the need for mixed-age building stock within city blocks so that a wide range of outcomes — of both cultural and economic enterprise — would be possible, especially given the need for low-cost overhead for new or no-yield ventures. In thinking through LFRs, however, I have often willfully misappropriated Jacobs’s assertion as a tongue-in-cheek slogan for their continuation. On the one hand, these buildings now comprise some of the older building stock in our communities, and one might romantically understand them as incubators of the new, a step removed from the too-well-lit, too-much-glass, too-thought-out, commercial-friendly public infrastructure enshrined by municipalities today. On the other hand, LFRs were seemingly built to be old from the jump, invoking the architectural charms of Granada, or the historic bridges of Venice, or even the mineral-based stalactites and geologic formations of underground cave systems. Buildings built to be old that are now old buildings.

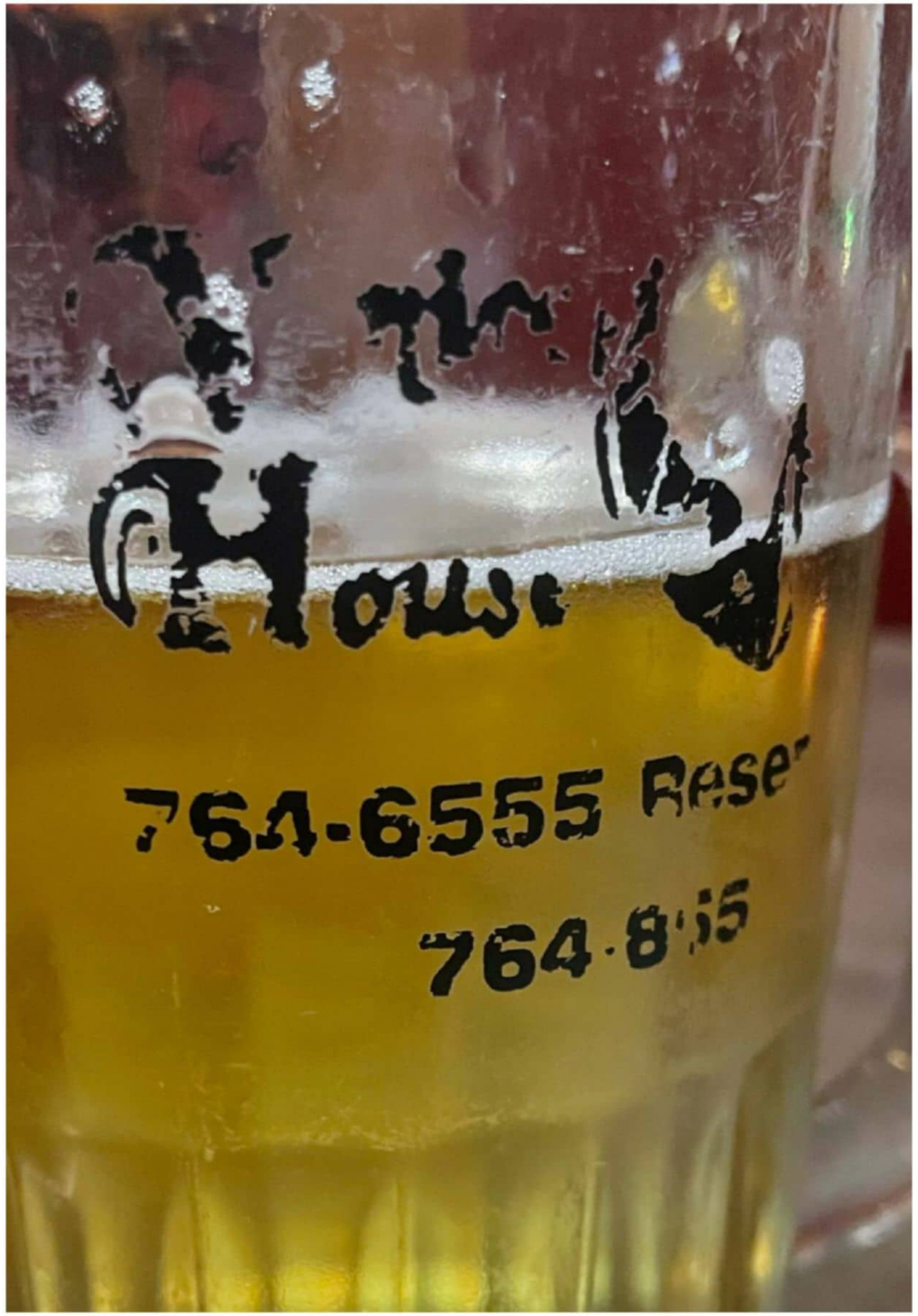
And, yet, the time is not out of joint.[11] In *Ghosts of My Life* (2015), Mark Fisher critiques the prevalence of anachronistic forms of cultural pastiche, identifying within them “a stasis [that] has been buried, interred behind a superficial frenzy of ‘newness,’ of perpetual movement.”[12] Fisher rightfully locates this stasis within numerous creative modes: music, literature, and film, predominantly that, while touting themselves as contemporary, are remixes of past forms veiled by a façade of newness. This jumbling of time produces a feeling of inertia that has come to define our current age. The effect can easily be identified in hordes of contemporary old-style saloons, retro diners and — most ominously — prepackaged dive bars, as they blatantly recycle past forms while marketing themselves as a novel experience. However, my gut tells me that LFRs operate outside of this phenomenon. While they possess no shortage of reference to other times and places, they refuse to embody them with the same theme-crazed fervour of the newer models premised on simulating the experience of a different time while claiming the concept is novel. For LFRs, thematically-driven experience is mostly coincidental. There’s no post-irony. There’s no post-anything. The LFR doesn’t operate within the framework of a referent to push against. They are not contingent. They are perfectly in time.

Each of us has an archetypical LFR that serves as our benchmark for the term. For me, it is The Lumber House. Although it burned to the ground nearly two decades ago, I still remember the hazy low-lit wood interior, burnt-out bulbs in the street sign, and the blinding glow from the takeout window. Even if my memory is faint, I can still call back those scenes felt in the gut before their images come into focus. Cobwebs are live wires under incandescent glow, and another twenty evaporates in a VLT.

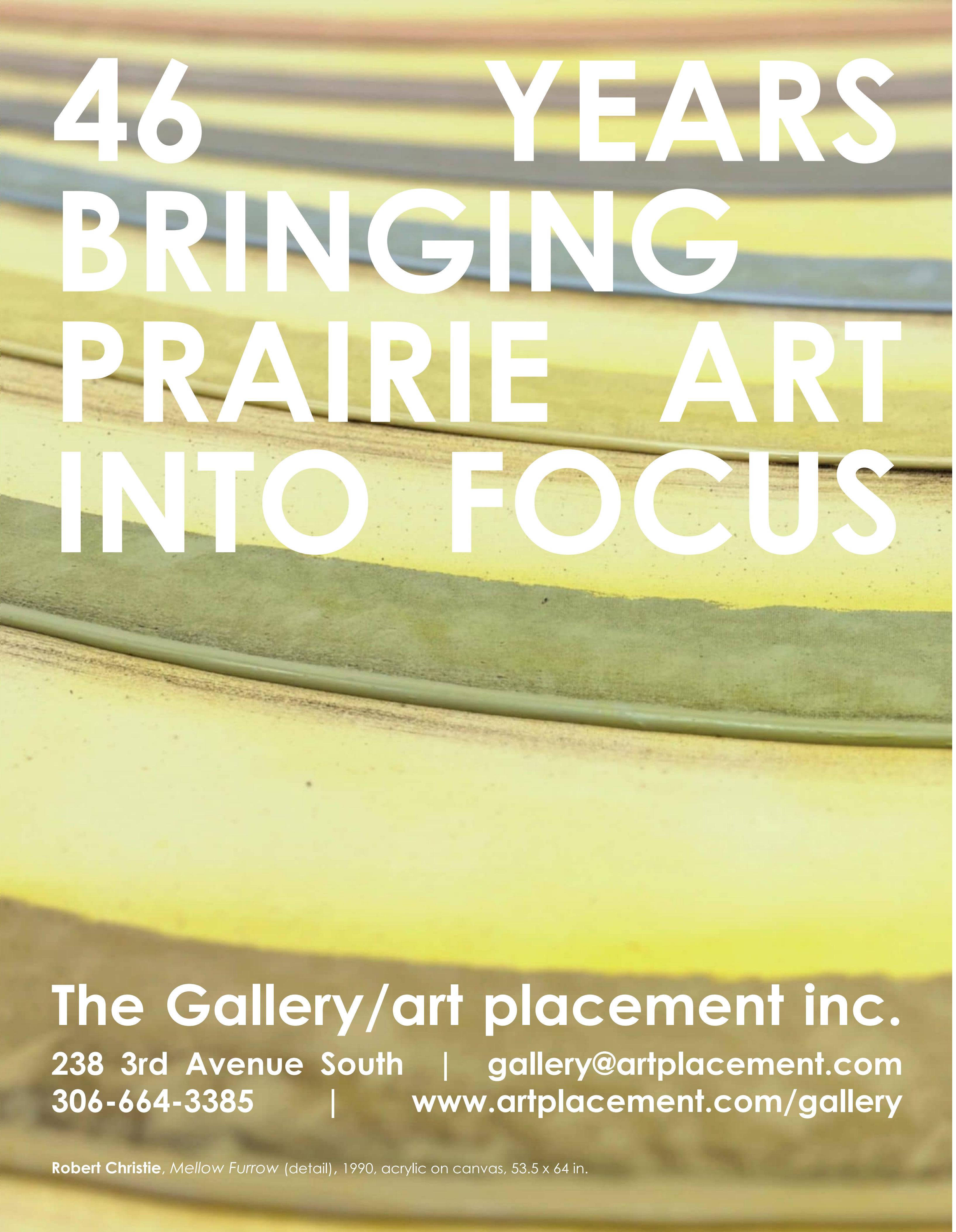
__Cole Thompson__ is an essayist from Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, currently residing on Treaty 6 territory and the traditional homeland of the Métis in Saskatoon. He is the Coordinating Curator for the University of Saskatchewan Art Galleries and Collections and holds an MA in Visual and Critical Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His current work and research centres on the horizon as an aesthetic and political genre.

Notes

1. Brian Massumi, “The Autonomy of Affect,” *Cultural Critique*, 31 (1995): 88.
2. Massumi, “The Autonomy of Affect,” 88.
3. Massumi, “The Autonomy of Affect,” 90-91.
4. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 237-239.
5. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 239.
6. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 160-161.
7. I owe both the sentiment and phrasing of “being in a scene” to the work of Kathleen Stewart and Lauren Berlant, most notably in their co-authored book *The Hundreds* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019).
8. Tan Lin, *Seven Controlled Vocabularies and Obituary 2004. The Joy of Cooking* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2010), 16.
9. Laura Riding Jackson, “All Literature,” *Anarchism is Not Enough* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1928), 20.
10. Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1961), 188.
11. *In Specters of Marx* (New York: Routledge, 1994), Jacques Derrida often returns to a quotation from *Hamlet* that “The time is out of joint” to describe forms of broken time that are hauntological. Mark Fisher also uses this phrasing in *Ghost of My Life*. In relation to LFRs, I argue that time is not broken at all. Since they are so distinctly unlike the places they elicit – Venice, for example – they do not take on the temporal strangeness that occurs when forms that are out of time persist in the present.
12. Mark Fisher, *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures* (Winchester, UK: Zero Books, 2014), 12-13.



Detail of glassware from The Venice House in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Image courtesy of the author.



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Robert Christie, *Mellow Furrow* (detail), 1990, acrylic on canvas, 53.5 x 64 in.

WALTER PHILLIPS GALLERY

Facing Photographs

February 14 – May 4, 2025

Opening Reception: February 13, 2025

Drawing inspiration from artist Rosalie Favell's series, *Facing the Camera* (2008–2018), the exhibition *Facing Photographs* brings together works primarily selected from Banff Centre's Permanent Collection that take up questions of agency in relation to representations of self or those with whom the artist shares identification or social worlds. The presented works directly or implicitly engage with photography's entanglement with the colonial project, refute fixed conceptions of identity, or reflect modes of self-representation and its politics.

Listening Devices

August 23, 2024 – Ongoing

Taking place outside of Walter Phillips Gallery, *Listening Devices* is comprised of audio and score-based works in Banff Centre's Permanent Collection or on long-term loan that are informed by the relationship between sound, listener, and location.

Facing Photographs is presented in partnership with Exposure Photography Festival.
Walter Phillips Gallery gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Canada Council for the Arts, Alberta Foundation for the Arts, Government of Canada and Government of Alberta.

Rosalie Favell, *Candice Hopkins, Banff, Alberta; Nadia Myre, Banff, Alberta; Tania Willard, Banff, Alberta*; all 2008, from the series, *Facing the Camera*, 2008–2018.

Walter Phillips Gallery
12:30 – 5 pm
Wednesday through Sunday
Admission is FREE and open to all

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SHIRLEY CARDS

A history of photography's bias

By Juan Ortiz Apuy

Collecting, salvaging, and—if I'm being honest—hoarding are essential activities in my art practice. I love the chance encounters that arise from gathering potential materials for my artwork. As such, my regular studio days include trips to flea markets and thrift stores, where one fortuitous discovery can lead me into deep and winding research rabbit holes.

It was during one of these routine visits last year that I came across a worn-out, dark green booklet titled *Kodak Color Dataguide*.

Printed in 1975, the *Dataguide* was a manual for printing film photographs. Tucked into the middle of this one was a small envelope containing a four-by-six-inch photo of a woman and the film negative to reproduce it. The subject, a white woman with brown hair, is centered between three bright pillows (red, yellow, and blue). A white fur cape hangs off her shoulders, and she holds her left hand—clad in pearls and a black evening glove—in front of her chest. I soon found out this photo was an example of what were known as "Shirley Cards."

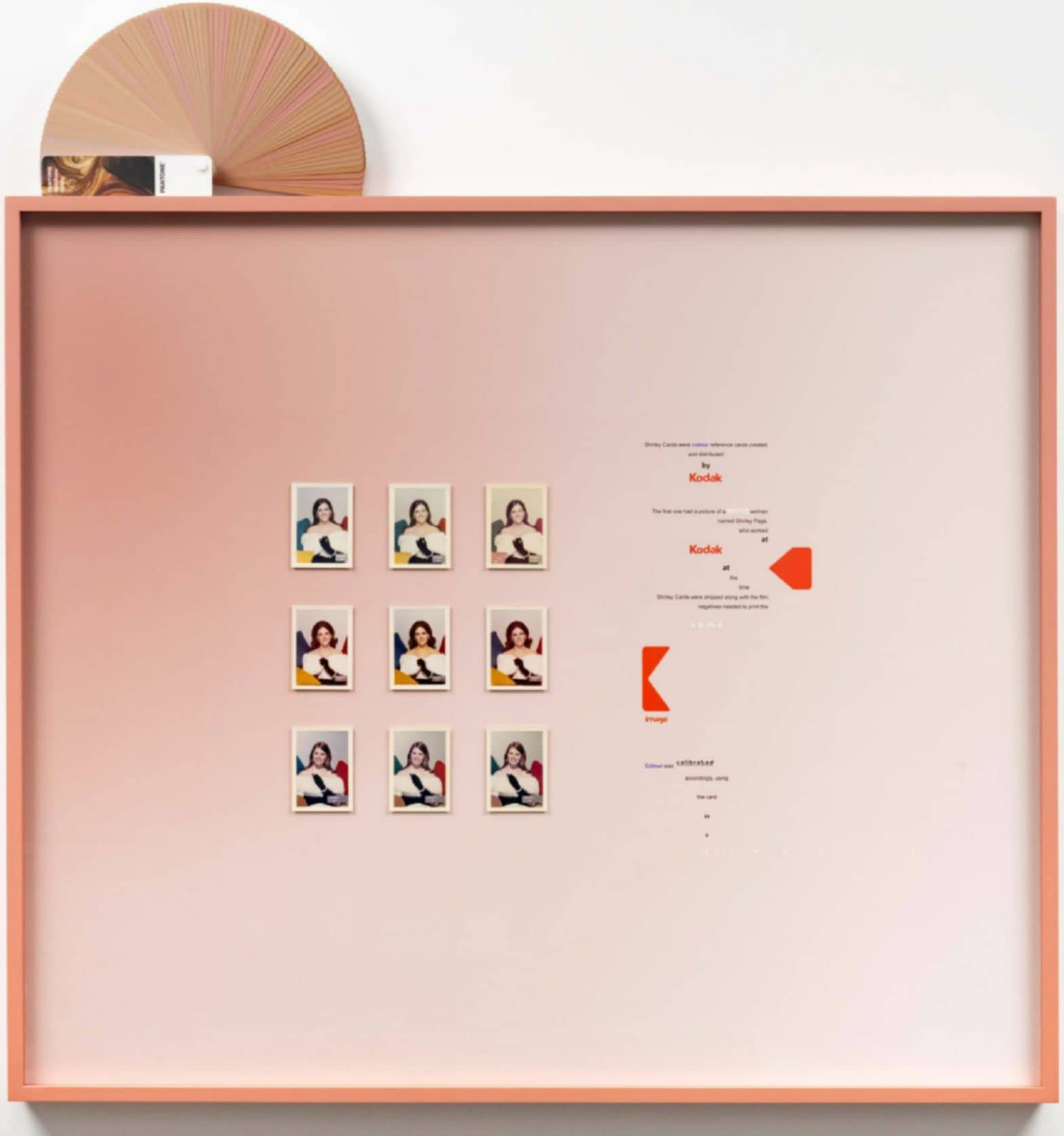
Beginning in the 1950s, due to the burgeoning demand for photo processing and printing services, one-hour photo labs opened all over the U.S. and Canada. Kodak supplied these labs with printers and a copy of the *Kodak Color Dataguide* for calibrating and standardizing colour. The Shirley Cards—named after Shirley Page, a Kodak employee at the time who served as the first model—were included in each copy as a reference for colour printing.

Lab technicians used Shirley Cards and the film negative in an effort to recreate the same image, using white skin tone as the norm. Built into the printing processes and film emulsion itself, photography's bias has been an integral part of the medium's problematic history with representation. Rather than a neutral technology for capturing light and its colour, photography has always been a reflection of subjective choices and aesthetic decisions: both in its images and in the very equipment that captures them.

For my project, *Shirleys* (2024), I collected the Shirley Cards from three different *Guidebooks*. At first glance, the photos appeared identical, but a closer look revealed subtle distinctions: a pillow in the same position but a different colour, or the slight movement of the thumb in the black-gloved hand. Together with other variations such as changes in skin tone due to the ageing of paper (the same Shirley appearing more yellow), I was drawn to how the materiality of technology revealed itself as media and mediator. Despite the efforts for sameness and consistency, the idea of whiteness and ultimately race is what Stuart Hall calls a "floating signifier," a sliding and unfixed construct.

Placed atop the frame of one of my works from this series is one of the most uncanny objects in my collection, a 2024 *Pantone Skin Color Guide*. Purportedly created "by sampling actual skin tones across a full spectrum of human skin types," the guide is intended as a tool for the creative and advertising industry. This measuring device strikes me as strange in its appeal to cool objectivity and scientific accuracy.

Growing up in Latin America, a region with a colonial past where most of the population is of mixed heritage to varying degrees, colourism and the spectrum of skin hue seemed deeply entwined in our social structures, norms, and values. Even as technology has improved in delivering accurate representations in images, we should not lose sight of the fact that it is not only the technologies themselves but the technicians, photographers, and designers, as well as the industries, brands, and institutions surrounding them, that frame what we see and how we see it.



Juan Ortiz-Apuy, *Shirleys*, 2024. Inkjet print, Kodak "Shirley Cards", Pantone SkinTone Guide. 106 x 94 cm. Photo by "Paul Litherland". Image courtesy of the artist.

Shirley Cards were colour reference cards created
and distributed

by
Kodak

The first one had a picture of a WHITE woman
named Shirley Page,
who worked
at

Kodak
at
the
time
Shirley Cards were shipped along with the film
negatives needed to print the

same

image

Colour was calibrated

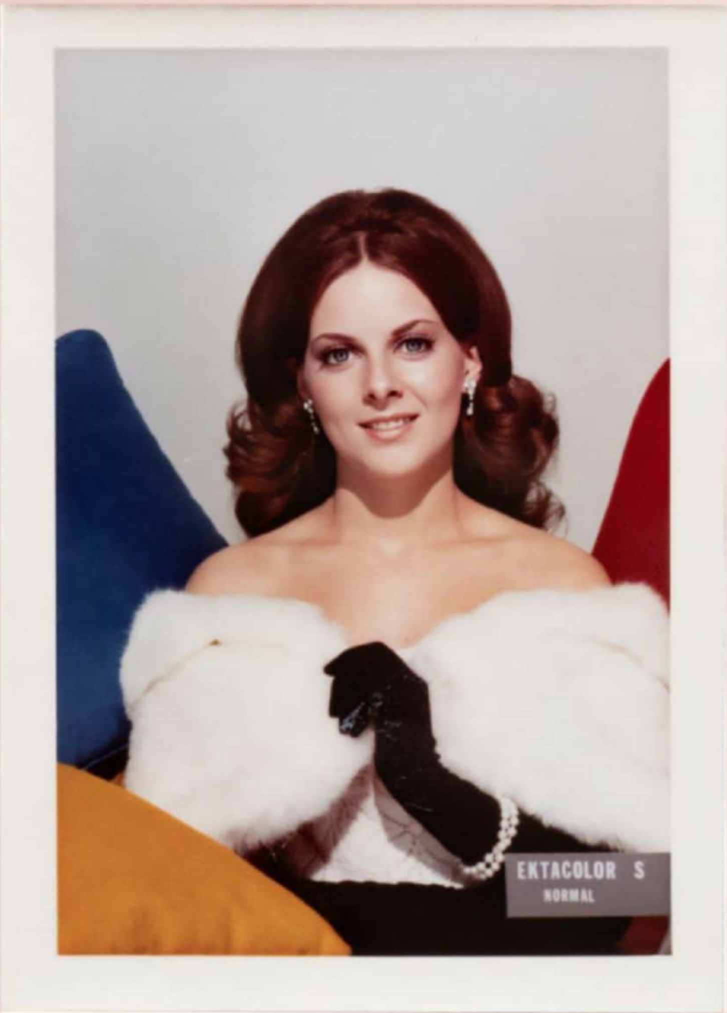
accordingly, using

the card

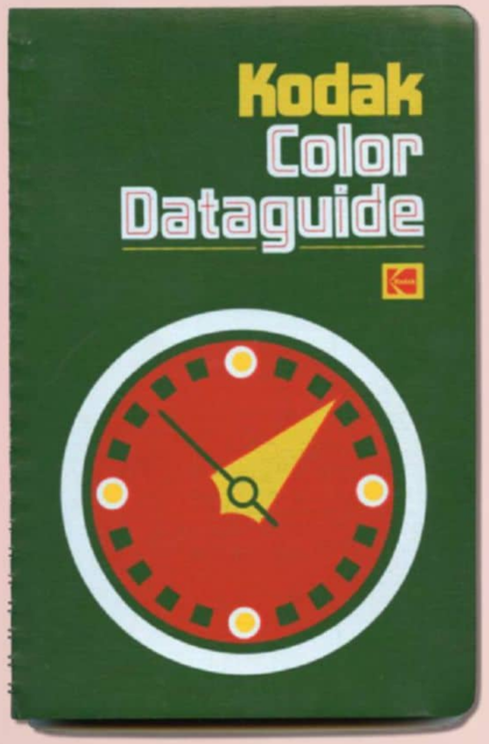
as

a

yardstick



PANTONE SkinTone™ Guide
PANTONE®



GRAY SCALE AND COLOR CONTROL PATCHES

***Juan Ortiz-Apuy** is a Canadian-Costa Rican artist who has been living and working in Tiohtià:ke/Montreal since 2003. Ortiz-Apuy has a BFA from Concordia University (2008), a Post-Graduate Diploma from The Glasgow School of Art (2009), and an MFA from NSCAD University (2011).*

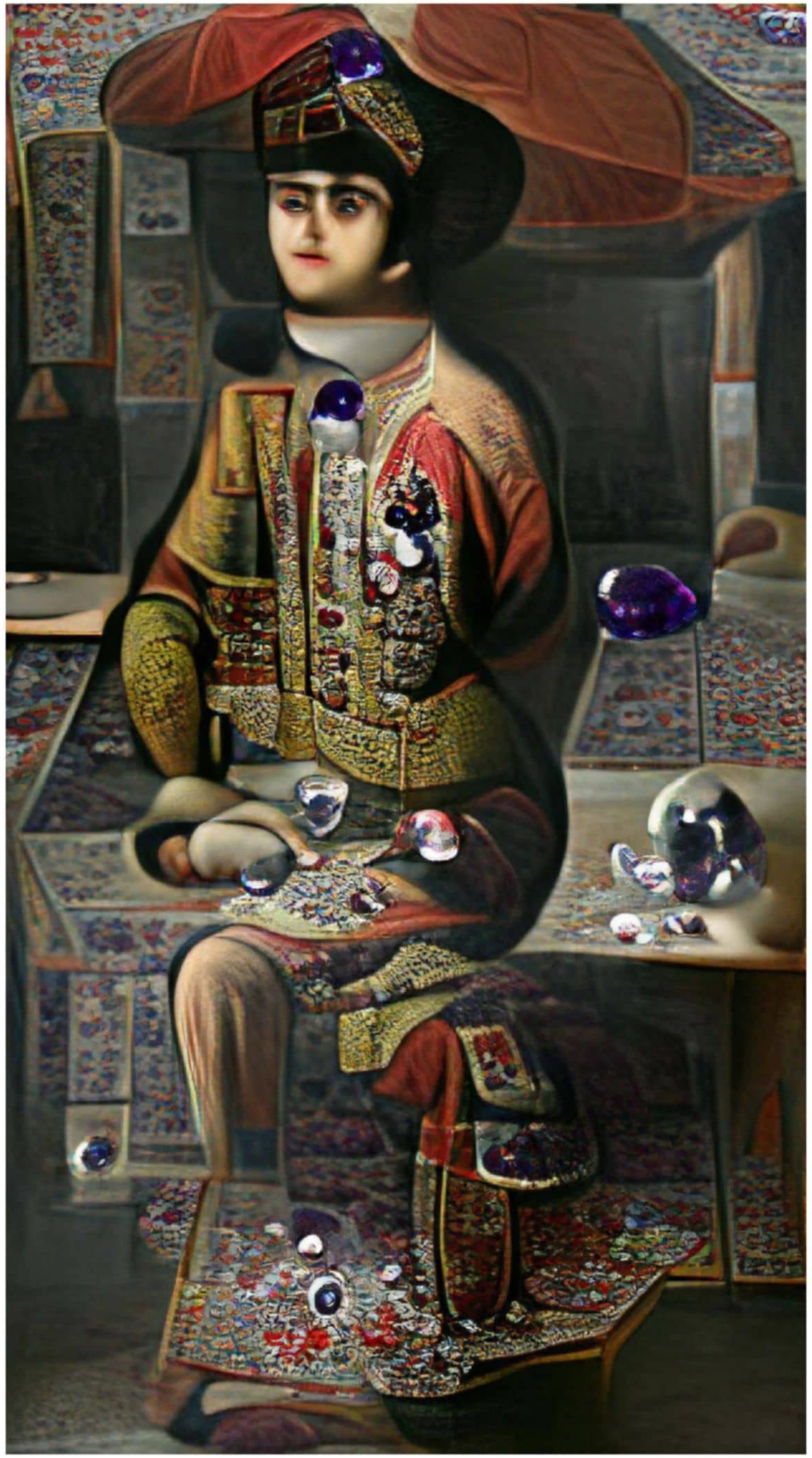
His work has been exhibited across Canada and internationally in venues such as Les Abattoirs Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (France), IKEA Museum (Sweden), Pamflett (Norway), DHC/ART Fondation Phi pour l'art contemporain (Montreal), Owens Art Gallery (Sackville), Carleton University Art Gallery (Ottawa), AXENÉO7 (Gatineau), MOMENTA Biennale de l'image (Montreal), Quebec City Biennial: Manif d'art 7 (Québec), Truck Contemporary Art (Calgary), Museum London (London), Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography (Toronto), VOX Centre de l'image Contemporaine (Montreal), Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art (Winnipeg), and the Esker Foundation (Calgary).

Ortiz-Apuy has been awarded numerous grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, Le Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. His work has been reviewed in various publications such as Canadian Art, MOMUS, esse arts + opinions, The Gazette (Montreal), Le Devoir (Montreal), and Public Parking. In 2024, he was awarded Best International Representation by the International Association of Art Critics (AICA, Costa Rican Chapter).

Ortiz-Apuy has completed several artist-in-residence programs, most notably at MASS MoCA (USA), The Vermont Studio Center (USA), The Frans Masereel Centre (Belgium), and the Guldagergaard International Ceramic Research Center (Denmark).

Ortiz-Apuy is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Studio Arts at Concordia University.

Pgs 48-51: Juan Ortiz-Apuy, *Shirleys* (detail), 2024. Inkjet print, Kodak "Shirley Cards", Pantone SkinTone Guide, 106 x 94 cm. Photo by "Paul Litherland". Image courtesy of the artist.



Morehshin Allahyari, ماه طلعت *Moon-faced*, 2022. Video still. Image courtesy of the artist.

TASTES LIKE ABUNDANCE:

The Open and Closing Circuits of Artificial Intelligence in Contemporary Art

By Noor Bhangu

The synchronized launches of several Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools marked 2023 as the year AI went mainstream: starting with ChatGPT at the end of 2022, and followed by new tools and platforms developed by Google, Microsoft, and Amazon. For many, AI has signalled an increased development in education, business, and government sectors, significantly shaping the flavour of everyday life. In the field of visual culture, AI has been taken up by numerous artists as a tool to mediate the exchange between the past, the self, and the possible.

In an online manifesto titled "An Internet Like a Drag Show," New York-based artist Lil Miss Hot Mess wrote: "I want an Internet that's like a drag show. Daring, decentralized, and maybe even a bit delusional. Open, ostentatious, and overflowing with opulence."[1] Using AI, Lil Miss Hot Mess generated a series of images to accompany her text. The images feature hyperrealistic portrayals of drag queens with big hair, glitchy faces, and dazzling gestures, peppered with the artist's provocations to dare, to become delusional, and luxuriate in opulence. While the artist never named her use of AI, the project was, nonetheless, grounded in the world-building possibilities of this emergent technology.

Artists Morehshin Allahyari and Aziza Kadyri similarly engage the technology of AI to engage the past as yet another fiction in the formation of a more inclusive and radical present. I first encountered New York-based artist Morehshin Allahyari in the late 2010s, around the time I was deepening my own approach to archives and the potential of creative interventions. On a last-minute road trip to Regina, I happened upon a solo exhibition of her work, "She Who Sees the Unknown," at MacKenzie Art Gallery, curated by John G. Hampton. The exhibition was thematically rooted in Allahyari's research on Islamic spirituality and included a series of digitally mediated sculptures and installations. "She Who Sees the Unknown" was my first introduction to Allahyari's practice, which many (including Allahyari) locate at the intersection of history, technology, and activism. Yet, the project that I continue to return to is her 2022 series, ماه طلعت *Moon-faced*, which works across diverse registers of identity to forge an alternative history of sexuality.

ماه طلعت *Moon-faced* consists of a series of AI-generated moving portraits and prints drawn from the archive of paintings from the Qajar dynastic era in Iran, dating from the end of the 18th century to the beginning of the 20th. In working with and against this archive, Allahyari aims to recuperate a time in Iranian history when ideas of gender and sexuality were fluid and not yet cut short by Western ideals of progress and permissibility. According to scholar Afsaneh Najmabadi, before the period of active Western encroachment in the 19th century, ideals of beauty were not differentiated by gender; rather, standards of beauty were shared by both men and women. Women were often painted and photographed with thick eyebrows and mustaches, while young beardless men were depicted with rosy cheeks and in languid postures. Najmabadi credits the colonial encounter between Qajar Iran and Europe with the widespread embrace of Western ideals of gender-differentiated beauty.[2] Evoking these transformations in regimes of representation, Allahyari used a generative AI

Aziza Kadyri, *Self-Exoticisation Archives (II, IV)*, 2023. Video still. Image courtesy of the artist.

image model to visualize and recuperate a queer history, unburdened by the straightening (read: Westernization) of the archive.

The result is a large body of work that is Qajar-adjacent in its use of colour, frame, and ornamentation, but one that leans into the aesthetics of the present. These reimagined portraits of Qajar Iran continue to employ the decorative and colourful vocabulary of the past. Rich hues of red, blue, and violet dominate the works, with details of draped rugs, foliage, and heavy bodily ornamentation dominating the scene. While most of the portraits have a glitchy referentiality to existing works, one video begins with a precise reference to the 19th-century painting, *Woman with a Mirror*. The Qajar painting is held for a second before its trace dissolves into other composite bodies and structures.

The references to the existing Qajar archive alongside Allahyari's desire to reintroduce queerness to its fold come together in ماه طلعت *Moon-faced* through the aesthetics of the present, namely through the vehicle of glitch. American curator and scholar Legacy Russell describes glitch as an error that can work as a "'correction to the machine,' which has already been rocked by centuries of economic, racial, sexual, and gender violence." For Russell, glitch has the potential to enact a "slipperiness of gender," through which we can "set out to explore man, to expand 'woman.'"[3] The otherworldly, piecemeal representation of historical figures, depicted beyond the binary of gender, hangs on the potential of glitch to expand archival notions of both man and woman, beauty, and states of embodiment and disembodiment. Through the imperfectly constructed scenes, with facial features misaligned and parts of the body left unfinished, glitch enters the archive and compels us to see otherwise—a queer elsewhere on the horizon.

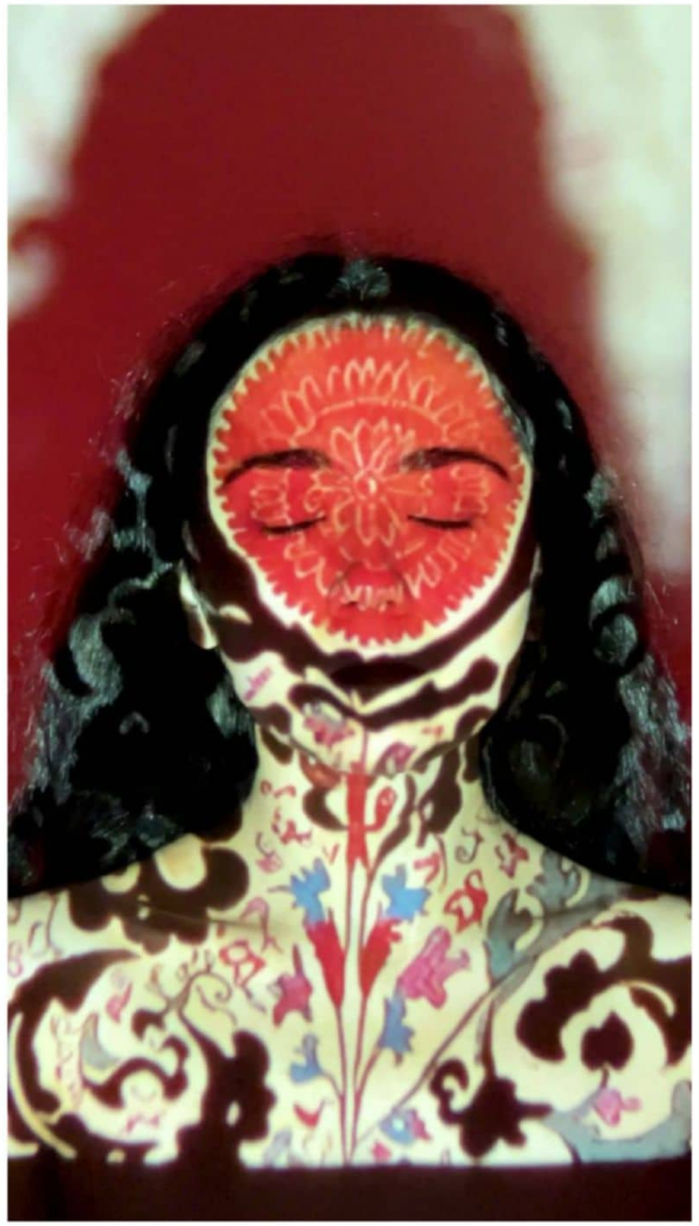
As Allahyari's work continues to reflect on the present conditions for access and transformation of the archive, she is joined in this pursuit by London-based artist Aziza Kadyri, who enters this dense context of struggle through the frame of ornament and its histories. In the performances, installations, videos, and digital works comprising Kadyri's practice, ornamental forms and archives are activated to explore issues of migration, feminine labour, and aesthetic traditions. Much of her work is rooted in the tradition of Suzani embroidery from Central Asia, practiced primarily by women in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kadyri's native Uzbekistan. Throughout her work, ornamental forms consisting of floral, astral, and geometric motifs merge with the artist's simultaneous interest in digitality and AI.

In her ongoing project, *Self-Exotification Archives*, Kadyri employs images of Suzani embroidery and AI technology to consider her own embodiment of traditions and cultural fluidity. After training the AI on an archive of traditional Suzani embroidery, Kadyri then prompted the tool to "interpret" her own portrait. The result of this collaboration is a series of videos that morph from human to ornamental. In some, the Suzani patterns build on the artist's existing features, while other applications are messy, skewed, and wayward.

Four short videos from the project are included on the artist's website. The second video begins with a side profile of the artist's face, which dissolves into an ornate pattern. Before viewing the work online, I was struck by the project description, in which Kadyri shared, "I question whether my portrayal of these experiences only serves to perpetuate and idealise aesthetics that have been co-opted and commercialised for the outer world to consume."[4] I found the artist's naming of this conundrum compelling, as it weaves the history of colonial and Oriental encroachment into the fabric of experimentation. In many ways, the video accentuates these concerns. The initial transformation of ornamental forms on the face is reminiscent of 19th-century colonial photography. Here, I am thinking of the photographic archives of women with thick eyebrows, painted/tattooed faces, and veils, which European travellers documented and, at times, staged to convey certain "truths" about the female, Oriental, and ornamentalized "other." In the early stills of the video, we see the transformation of a Central Asian face, but I can also recall countless other images of Māori, Filipino, and Indian women, whose embodiment of ornamental forms was scripted into their othering.

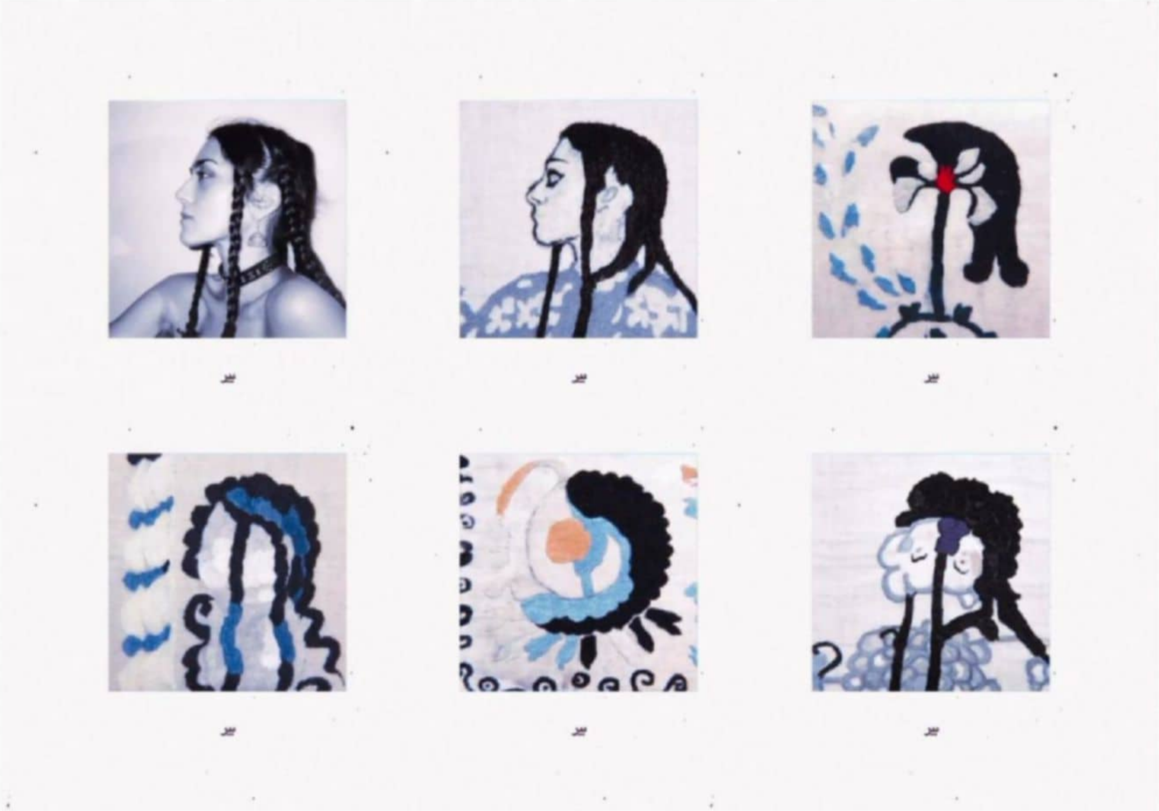
What I took away from Kadyri's experiments with ornamentation, bodies, and histories of othering was not the inherent compatibility between different forms, but what the use of AI with an archive of non-Western imagery revealed. In an Instagram post, Kadyri shared, "The results were quite eye-opening… Despite the reference image displaying an obviously Central Asian face [the artist's], most of the AI-generated images ended up looking more European, with many featuring blue or green eyes, lighter hairs, and patterns belonging to the Western art tradition."[5] In the fourth video, the artist appears before a white background and has a series of ornamental images projected onto her moving face. The European bias is most evident when the ornamental forms overwhelm the artist's face: certain projections provide a narrower contour, while others are visibly inflected with light eyes and hair. Here, the medium of the artwork is significant, because the video format does not produce a singular vision or narrative but rather presents the racialized and feminine body as a type of living archive, allowing a vast number of ornaments and aesthetic gestures to pass through.

If Allahyari and Kadyri have managed to employ AI tools to fashion a queer and feminist archive of the self and minoritized histories, it is not through an uncritical submission to the promised universality of technology. Reflecting on her use of AI technologies in the making of ماه طلعت *Moon-faced*, Allahyari has stressed ways in which the technology reproduces bias. AI models which have been trained on our deeply flawed cultural archives are encoded with racial, gender, sexuality, and civilizational biases. To produce the desired images, Kadyri had to supplement the model with her own archive of images and "trick" it into producing the desired results.[6] The consistent nods to racial and other identity-based biases embedded in Allahyari and Kadyri's work demonstrate a healthy skepticism of technology, a position that is reminiscent of the work of many artists experimenting with digital mediums.



Aziza Kadyri, *Self-Exoticisation Archives (II, IV)*, 2023. Video still. Image courtesy of the artist.

Toronto-based artist Rah Eleh continues the practice of appropriating digital tools to reveal their gaps and limitations. Her 2019 exhibition, "#oreo_liveitwhite," curated by Jonathan Hobin for the School of Photographic Arts in Ottawa reflects the artist's ongoing interrogation of racism and nationalism in social media platforms and other digital spaces. Appropriating postures, hashtags, and narratives disseminated by neo-Nazi groups online, the artist uses



Aziza Kadyri, *Self-Exoticisation Archives (II, IV)*, 2023. Video still. Image courtesy of the artist.

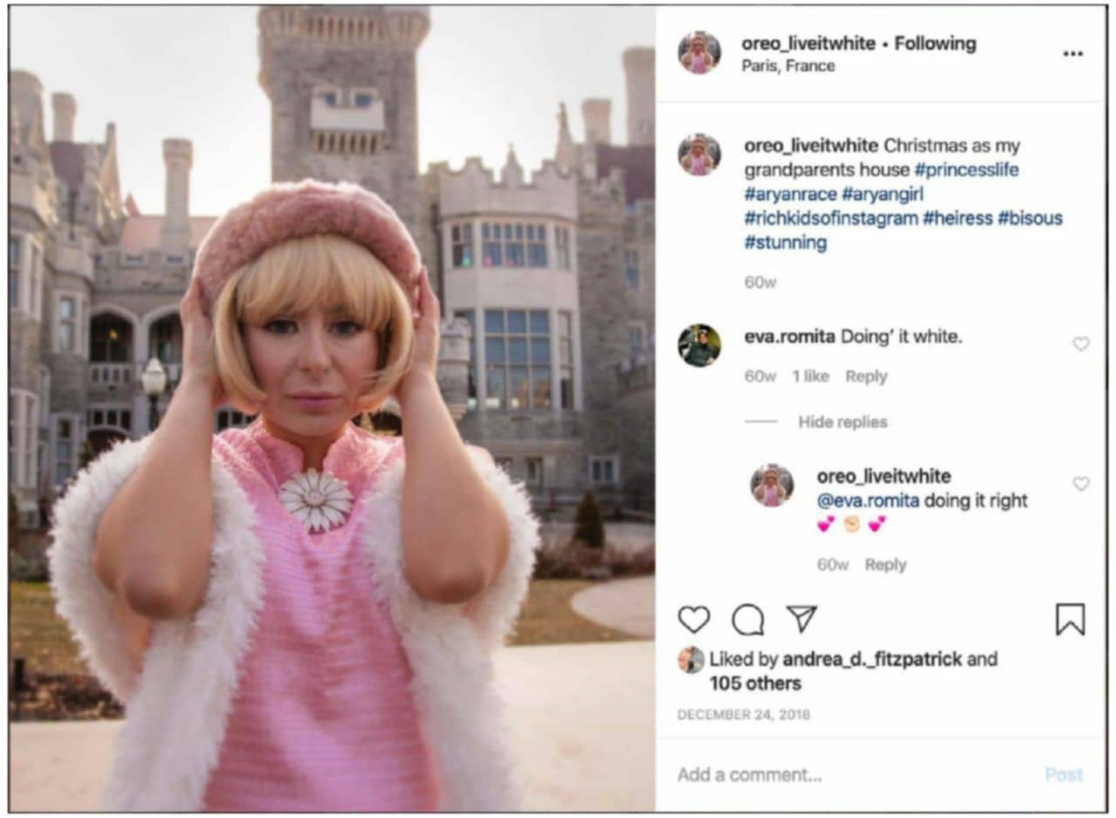
her alter-ego, Oreo, to perform a critique. These hateful texts are appropriated verbatim by Oreo, whose performative mask of a blonde, white-presenting, and bubbly digital avatar never glitches, revealing the vigour and resilience of racism and discrimination in digital spaces.

Given the ongoing violence enacted by colonial archives and their uses, it is no wonder that to arrive elsewhere–a place of daring, delusionality, and opulence–requires turning away from what scholar Anjali Arondekar calls "historical structures of vulnerability, damage, and loss."[7] Alongside viewing the digital space and AI as a gateway to these "elsewheres," Arondekar's concept of abundance, which she adopts to challenge the presumption of scarcity and assert plentitude in the archives of postcolonial history and sexuality studies, is equally significant to my study of Allahyari, Kadyri, and Eleh's practices, as it critically unbraids my own orientation to histories of loss. Together, their work demonstrates how historical structures of limited representation are not altogether confined to the past but continue to haunt existing and emerging technologies.

Following the work of Morehshin Allahyari, Aziza Kadyri, and Rah Eleh, I am increasingly interested in the potential uses of AI and other generative tools to rethink our relations to our bodies, archives, and the potential of technology. Yet, my enthusiasm involves a hesitation and an embodied fear that goes beyond the promise of an abundant future. For me, the year 2023 does not signify the year that AI went mainstream but the year that genocide and colonialism fiercely re-entered the world stage. Following the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023, Israel launched an aggressive war in the region, killing and injuring tens of thousands of people in Palestine as well as Lebanon, Iran, Syria, and Yemen.

This escalation comes out of a long century of colonization, but what the events of 2023 introduce is the implementation of AI technology in the service of colonization and genocide. In a 2024 report titled "Impacts of AI Technologies on Palestinian Lives and Narratives," published on 7amleh, a not-for-profit organization advocating for Palestinian digital rights, Dr. Ameera Kawash describes how Israel's use of AI in surveillance and automated warfare is unprecedented and alarming.[8] The article outlines technologies like "Wolf Pack" (a database of Palestinians in the West Bank developed using facial recognition) and "The Gospel" (a system which uses an Israeli army database for target selection), both of which are "battle-tested" on Palestinians and are now being marketed to other countries.[9]

For the artists discussed here and myself, AI offers both abundance and foreclosure. The key to navigating this contradiction is a queer, feminist, and embodied refusal that continues to keep human life on the horizon. Morehshin Allahyari, Aziza Kadyri, and Rah Eleh present alternative visions of abundance, often punctured by gaps and biases, to ultimately gesture to the rich material presence of marginalized communities in the past and the digital future. Thrust into an era of technology that makes our desires possible while cutting many of our lives short, I choose solace in the words of Arondekar: "We are here, there, and everywhere." We are abundant–how much more daring, delusional, and opulent could we be if we believed it?



oreo_liveitwhite • Following
Paris, France

oreo_liveitwhite Christmas as my grandparents house #princesslife #aryanrace #aryangirl #richkidsofinstagram #heiress #bisous #stunning

60w

eva.romita Doing' it white.

60w 1 like

oreo_liveitwhite @eva.romita doing it right 💕 👏 💕

60w

Liked by andrea_d._fitzpatrick and 105 others

DECEMBER 24, 2018

Rah Eleh, *#oreo_liveitwhite*, 2018. Image courtesy of the artist.

***Noor Bhangu** is a curator and scholar, whose practice is rooted in relational curatorial aesthetics and practices. Through curatorial intervention, she hopes to involve politics of history, memory and materiality to problematize dominant histories of representation. She completed her BA in the History of Art and her MA in Cultural Studies: Curatorial Practices at the University of Winnipeg. In 2018, she began her PhD in Communication and Culture at Toronto Metropolitan University and York University in Tkaronto, Toronto.*

Notes

1. Lil Miss Hot Mess, "We Refuse, We Want, We Commit," *We Refuse, We Want, We Commit: Volume 1*, accessed October 1, 2024, https://book.strategictransparency.network/vol1/.
2. Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
3. Legacy Russell, *Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto* (London: Verso, 2020), 3.
4. Aziza Kadyri, "Self-Exoticisation Archives," *Aziza Kadyri*, accessed October 20, 2024, https://www.azizakadyri.com/ai-suzani.
5. Aziza Kadyri, "@aziza.Kadyri," Instagram post, posted September 24, 2023, https://www.instagram.com/p/CxktNg0Lnti/.
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A Boundless and Radiant Aura (2024)

CELESTIAL THRONE:

Augmented Reality

By Rah Eleh

Celestial Throne, Original Digital Video, 2022

Celestial Throne parodies the tropes endemic to a classic game show, specifically Jeopardy!, where clues are provided and contestants guess the answers. The clues in the game show expose coded internet dialect, iconography, memes, and aesthetics used by far-right hate groups to disseminate the movement's political ideologies, spread messages of animosity, and lure recruits. The video iteration of this work features a series of characters all performed by the artists. The characterizations deconstruct racial stereotypes, while the videos are a pointed critique of far-right internet extremism. For BlackFlash's collaboration with EQ Bank to highlight digital arts, the artist uses the medium of AR and the interface of the digital screen to expose three clues from the board.

Celestial Throne
https://www.rah-eleh.com/blog/2022/04/15/celestial-throne/

Celestial Throne Trailer
https://www.instagram.com/p/CcnGIAXjpsL/?hl=en

Download free Artivive app to view the work
https://apps.apple.com/us/app/artivive/id1188737494

This project is supported by EQ Bank as part of an ongoing partnership that highlights Canadian digital art practices, featuring commissioned works showcased in print and through expanded digital formats.

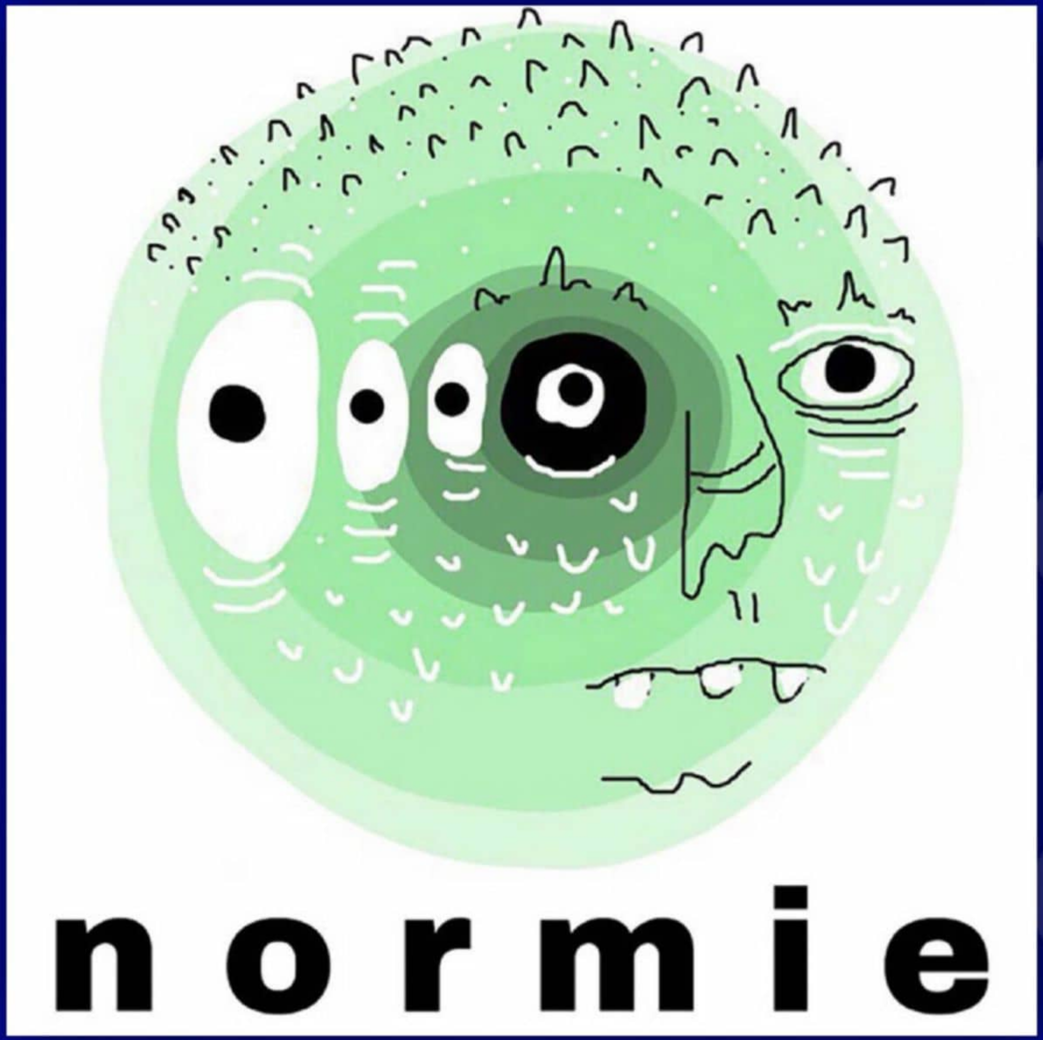
***Rah Eleh** is a visual artist and a PhD candidate at the die Angewandte (University of Applied Arts) in Vienna, Austria. Rah's work has been exhibited extensively both nationally and internationally at spaces including: Personal Structures Venice Biennale (ECC, Palazzo Mora), The Juno Awards (Canada), National Museum (Oslo, Norway), Vögele Kultur Zentrum, (Pfäffikon, Switzerland), Nuit Blanche (Toronto), Museum London, Vienna Art Week (Austria), Carleton University Art Gallery (Ottawa), Williams College Museum of Art (Williamstown, Massachusetts), Miami Art Basel, Nieuwe Vide (Haarlem, Netherlands), SomoS Art Haus (Berlin, Germany), and Onassis Cultural Center (Athens, Greece). She has been the recipient of numerous awards including: Long listed for 2023 Sobey Art Award, Chalmers Arts Fellowship, numerous Canada Council, Ontario Arts Council and Toronto Art Council Grants, SSHRC for her MFA and the CSG Doctoral Fellowship for her PhD. She has been awarded several residencies including the ONX Studio (NYC, NY, 2024), Intergenerational LGBTQ Artist Residency (Toronto Island, 2019), Koumaria Residency (Greece, 2016), Studio Das Weisse Haus (Vienna, 2014) and the Artslant Georgia Fee Residency (Paris).*

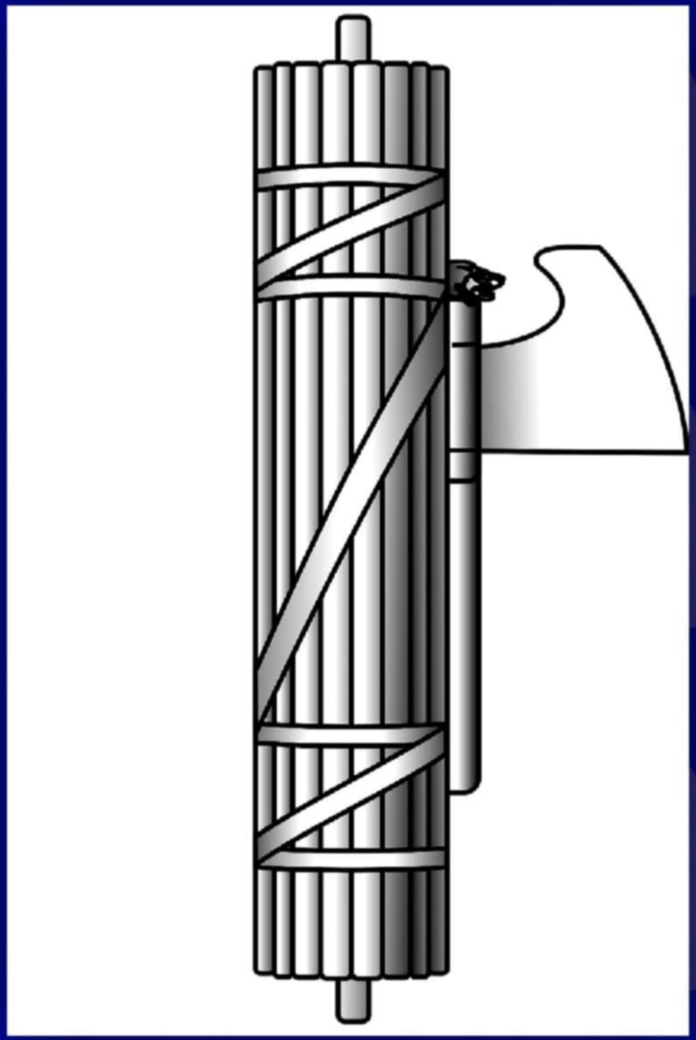
Rah Eleh is represented by de Montigny Contemporary and Vtape, Canada's leading artist-run distributor for video art.

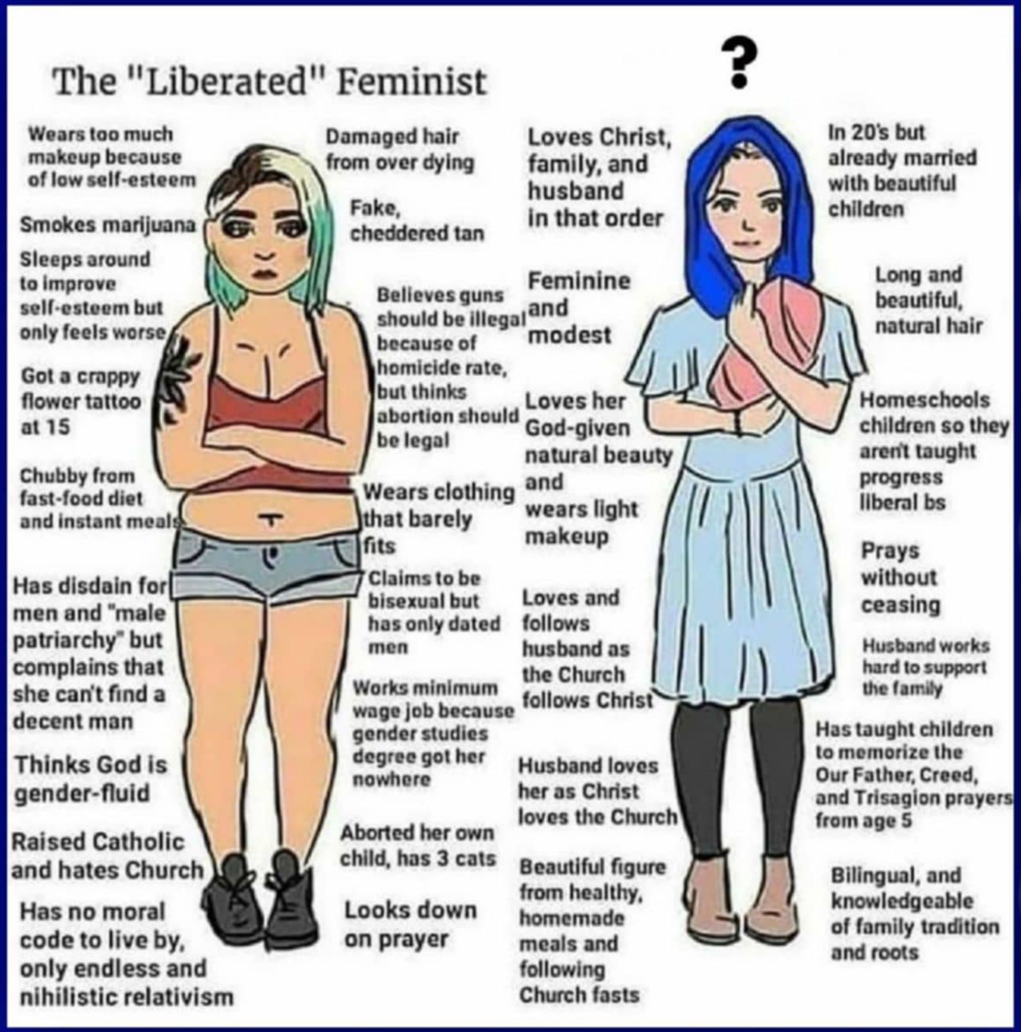
Website: www.rah-eleh.com
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/elehrah/?hl=en
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/rah.eleh.3

Download the free Artivive app by scanning the QR code above.

Open Artivive and point your camera at the following three pages to expose three clues on the Jeopordy board.







The "Liberated" Feminist

Wears too much makeup because of low self-esteem

Smokes marijuana

Sleeps around to improve self-esteem but only feels worse

Got a crappy flower tattoo at 15

Chubby from fast-food diet and instant meals

Has disdain for men and "male patriarchy" but complains that she can't find a decent man

Thinks God is gender-fluid

Raised Catholic and hates Church

Has no moral code to live by, only endless and nihilistic relativism

Damaged hair from over dying

Fake, cheddered tan

Believes guns should be illegal because of homicide rate, but thinks abortion should be legal

Wears clothing that barely fits

Claims to be bisexual but has only dated men

Works minimum wage job because gender studies degree got her nowhere

Aborted her own child, has 3 cats

Looks down on prayer

?

Loves Christ, family, and husband in that order

Feminine and modest

Loves her God-given natural beauty and wears light makeup

Loves and follows husband as the Church follows Christ

Husband loves her as Christ loves the Church

Beautiful figure from healthy, homemade meals and following Church fasts

In 20's but already married with beautiful children

Long and beautiful, natural hair

Homeschools children so they aren't taught progress liberal bs

Prays without ceasing

Husband works hard to support the family

Has taught children to memorize the Our Father, Creed, and Trisagion prayers from age 5

Bilingual, and knowledgeable of family tradition and roots

Why The Caged Bird Sings — Immersive Engagements
Cheryl L'Hirondelle

March 14 – April 17 2025
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Curated by Judy McNaughton
Co-presented by Commonweal Community Arts and PAVED Arts

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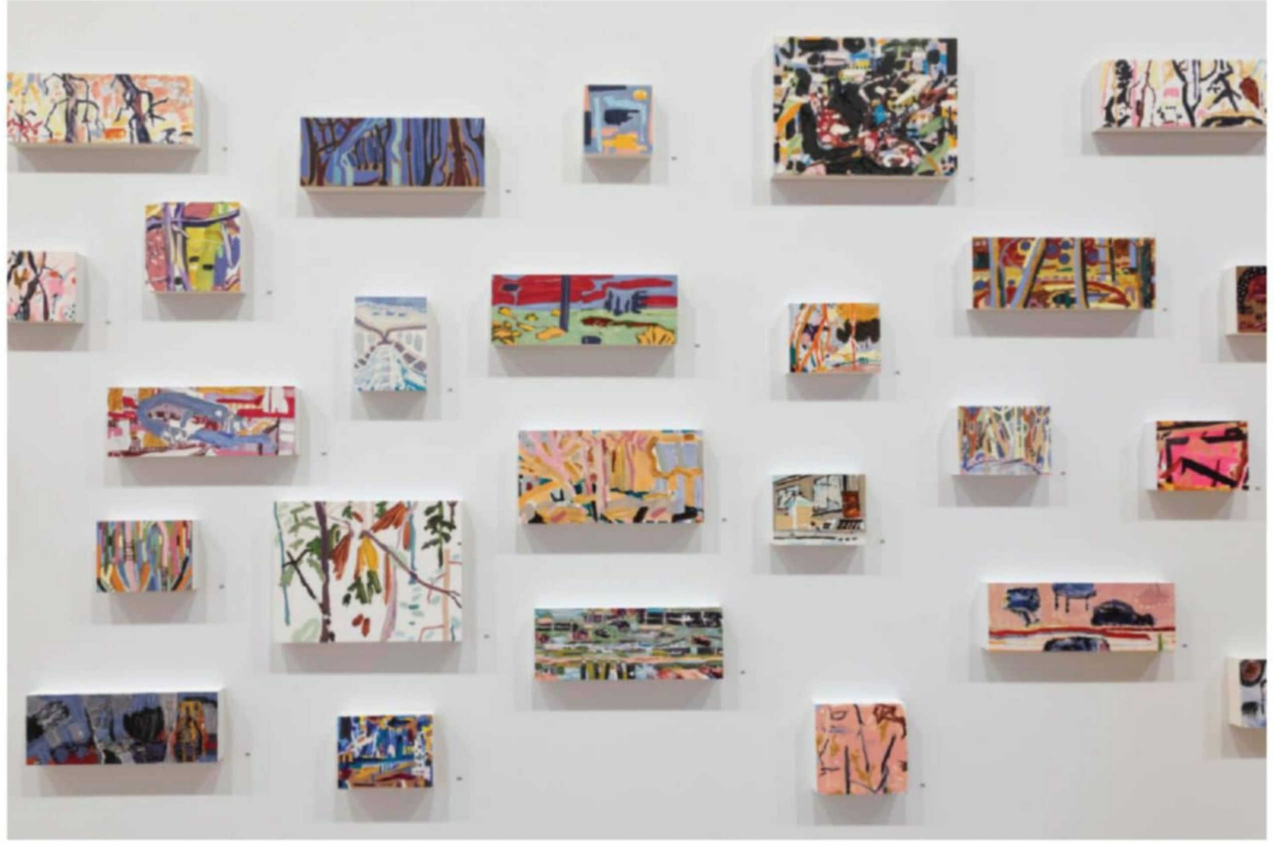
Exhibition

On view until April 6, 2025

Nancy Lowry
Colour in Place



Explore the intersection of abstraction and landscape with artist Nancy Lowry in a survey exhibition that also features friends, mentors and peers connected to the Emma Lake Artist Workshops.

rRemai mModern

Installation view, Nancy Lowry: *Colour in Place*, 2024, Remai Modern, Saskatoon. Photo: Carey Shaw.

41.3 $12
Display until
June 2025
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